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ABSTRACT

Each of the eight chapters of this report on life conditions of blacks living in Michigan addresses a different issue. The chapter titles (and their authors) are as follows: (1) "A Demographic Overview of Blacks in Michigan" (Maxie C. Jackson, Jr.); (2) "The Economic Status of Blacks in Michigan" (Karl D. Gregory); (3) "Unemployment, Employment, and Training in Michigan" (Richard W. Thomas); (4) "Black Political Participation in Michigan" (Wilbur C. Rich); (5) "Black Crime in Michigan" (Homer C. Hawkins); (6) "Black Youth in Michigan" (Algea Othella Harrison); (7) "The Media in Michigan" (Gilbert A. Maddox); and (8) "Summary and Conclusions: Racial Disparities Persist in Michigan" (Joe T. Darden). The concluding chapter, which analyzes general findings, asserts that the socioeconomic gap between blacks and whites in Michigan remains wide, and that true black progress will remain impossible to attain as long as this gap continues. It is predicted that, given the present conservative climate and the persisting attacks on equal opportunity policies and programs, it will be a long time before blacks reach parity with whites. (KH)

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THE STATE OF BLACK MICHIGAN: 1984

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FOREWORD

Since 1977, the National Urban League has published annually The State of Black America, a report that provides current information regarding black life in the United States.

Beginning with this 1984 report, the Michigan Council of Urban League Executives and Michigan State University's Center for Urban Affairs are cooperating in the publication each year of The State of Black Michigan. The writers contributing to these annual reports will analyze current factors that impact on specific life conditions affecting black citizens of the state and will make suggestions as to how these factors can be addressed by policy makers, program managers, and interested citizens.

We would like to express our appreciation to the Presidents of the Michigan Urban League affiliates and to the writers who provided the chapters for this report. The opinions and interpretations expressed in the various chapters are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent opinions or policy positions of the sponsors of this publication.

We are especially grateful to Michigan Bell Telephone Company for providing financial support for the production and distribution of the report.

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Chapter 1

A DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF BLACKS IN MICHIGAN

Maxie C. Jackson, Jr.

Each chapter in the State of Black Michigan: 1984 addresses a specific issue or problem as it relates to the life conditions of blacks* in the State of Michigan. This section presents a demographic overview of Michigan's black citizens in terms of population growth and distribution, family income, employment, educational attainment, family composition, life expectancy, and age composition. Most of these data are from the Bureau of the Census, from the Michigan Health Statistics, and from the Michigan Statistical Abstracts.

POPULATION GROWTH AND DISTRIBUTION

Michigan's black population has grown steadily from 15,223 or .73 percent of the total population in 1890 to 1,199,023 or 12.9 percent of the total population in 1980. Significant black population increases occurred between 1910 (17,115) and 1930 (169,453), and between 1940 (208,345) and 1960 (717,581) (Table 1). These population increases of 890 percent and 244 percent respectively were due in large part to the employment opportunities available in the auto industry. Although the black population has continued to grow since 1960, the rate of growth has declined.

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*Data presented in this report represent statistics on Michigan's black citizens unless referenced as "nonwhite" or "other-than-white." It should be noted that blacks constitute over 90 percent of the nonwhite and other-than-white categories.

Table 1

Population Growth in Michigan by Race, 1890 - 1980

	Total Population*	White	Black
1980	9,262,078	7,872,241	1,199,023
1970	8,875,083	7,843,307	990,663
1960	7,823,194	7,085,865	717,581
1950	6,371,766	5,917,825	442,296
1940	5,256,106	5,039,643	208,345
1930	4,842,325	4,663,507	169,453
1920	3,668,412	3,601,627	60,082
1910	2,810,173	2,785,247	17,115
1900	2,420,982	2,398,563	15,816
1890	2,093,890	2,072,884	15,223

*Total population figures include whites and all nonwhites.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of Population: 1960 Final Report PC (1)-24B, General Population Characteristics, Michigan. 1970 Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics. 1980 Census of Population, General Population Characteristics.

Although blacks can be found throughout the state, the highest concentrations are located in the southern half of the lower peninsula. The majority of Michigan's black population are found in southeast Michigan, the home of the state's industrial concentration and the nation's

automobile industry. Of Michigan's 83 counties, 15 counties located in the southern portion of the state contain 1,168,386, or 97.4 percent of Michigan's black population (Table 2).

Table 2

The Top 15 Michigan Counties Ranked According to Percentage of Blacks in Total County Population, 1980

County	Total Pop.	Black Pop.	Black % of Total
*Wayne (Detroit)	2,337,891	829,983	35.5
*Genesee (Flint)	450,449	78,804	17.5
Lake	7,711	1,285	16.7
Saginaw	228,059	35,841	15.7
Berrien	171,276	24,817	14.5
*Muskegon (Muskegon)	157,589	19,175	12.2
Washtenaw	264,748	28,323	10.7
*Calhoun (Battle Creek)	141,557	13,577	9.6
Cass	49,499	4,150	8.4
*Ingham (Lansing)	275,520	21,282	7.7
Kalamazoo	212,378	15,846	7.5
Van Buren	66,814	5,041	7.5
Jackson	151,495	10,840	7.2
*Kent (Grand Rapids)	444,506	31,460	7.1
*Oakland (Pontiac)	1,011,793	47,962	4.7

*Indicates counties with cities having Urban League Affiliates.

SOURCE: Wayne State University, Bureau of Business Research. School of Business Administration. Michigan Statistical Abstract, Seventeenth Ed. 1982-83, Detroit, Michigan.

In 1980, Michigan's black population of 12.9 percent was second in the Midwest, led only by Illinois, which had a black population of 14.7 percent. On the national level, Michigan ranked 16th (Table 3).

Table 3

Rank Position of Michigan's Black Population in the Midwest and in the U.S., 1980

Midwest, 1980

		% Total
1.	Illinois	14.7
2.	Michigan	12.9
3.	Ohio	10.0
4.	Indiana	7.6
5.	Wisconsin	3.9

U.S. 1980

(U.S. Black Population Distribution 11.7)

* 1.	Washington, D.C.	70.3	18.	Texas	12.0	35.	Rhode Island	2.9
2.	Mississippi	35.2	19.	Missouri	10.5	36.	Arizona	2.8
3.	S. Carolina	30.4	20.	Ohio	10.0	37.	Washington	2.6
4.	Louisiana	29.4	21.	Pennsylvania	8.8	38.	Hawaii	1.8
5.	Georgia	26.8	22.	California	7.7	39.	N. Mexico	1.8
6.	Alabama	25.6	23.	Indiana	7.6	40.	Oregon	1.4
7.	Maryland	22.7	24.	Kentucky	7.1	41.	Iowa	1.4
8.	N. Carolina	22.4	25.	Connecticut	7.0	42.	Minnesota	1.3
9.	Virginia	18.9	26.	Oklahoma	6.8	43.	Wyoming	0.7
10.	Arkansas	16.3	27.	Nevada	6.4	44.	Utah	0.6
11.	Delaware	16.1	28.	Kansas	5.3	45.	N. Dakota	0.4
12.	Tennessee	15.8	29.	Wisconsin	3.9	46.	N. Hampshire	0.4
13.	Illinois	14.7	30.	Massachusetts	3.9	47.	Idaho	0.3
14.	Florida	13.8	31.	Colorado	3.5	48.	S. Dakota	0.3
15.	New York	13.7	32.	Alaska	3.4	49.	Maine	0.3
16.	Michigan	12.9	33.	W. Virginia	3.3	50.	Montana	0.2
17.	New Jersey	12.6	34.	Nebraska	3.1	51.	Vermont	0.2

* Although not a state, Washington, D.C. is included for purposes of comparison.

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Residence

Residential patterns show that blacks are moving in greater numbers to the urban centers. Between 1960 and 1980, black urban residence increased from 686,591 to 1,166,851 or 70 percent. During this same period, black rural residence also increased from 30,990 to 32,172 or 3.8 percent. In 1980, Michigan's rural black population of 32,172 represented less than 3 percent of Michigan's total black population (1,199,023) (Table 4).

Table 4

Black Population Urban/Rural Residence
1960-1980/Percent Change
State of Michigan

	1980	1970	1960
State Total[1]	9,262,078	8,875,083	7,823,194
White	7,872,241	7,843,307	7,085,865
Black	1,199,023	990,663	717,581
Urban			
White	5,230,690	5,562,380	5,038,687
Black	1,166,851	960,005	686,591
Rural			
White	2,641,551	2,280,927	2,047,178
Black	32,172	30,658	30,990

Percent Change

	Black	White
1960 - 1970		
Urban	40.0	10.4
Rural	-1.1	11.4
1970 - 1980		
Urban	21.5	- 6.0
Rural	4.9	15.8

1. Only State total includes other races.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. United States Census of Population: 1970. General Social and Economic Characteristics, PC(1)-C24, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. United States Census of Population: 1980, Vol. 1, General Population Characteristics, PC80-1-B24, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. United States Census of Population: 1960. General Population Characteristics, PC(1)24B, Michigan.

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FAMILY INCOME

Black family income continues to lag behind white family income as reflected in Michigan family income data (Table 5). Of all black families, 34.6 percent have annual incomes below $10,000, as compared to 13.9 percent of white families. At the other end of the family income level scale, 47.7 percent of white family incomes exceed $25,000 compared to 28.6 percent of black family incomes. The median income in 1980 for white families was $24,167 compared to $15,680 for black families.

Table 5

Family Income by Race
State of Michigan, 1980

	White	%		Black	%	
Total Families	1,372,212			273,293		
Less than $5,000	58,560	4.3		44,282	16.2	
$5,000 to 7,499	61,284	4.5	13.9	28,895	10.6	34.6
7,500 to 9,999	69,548	5.1		21,334	7.8	
10,000 to 14,999	150,510	11.0		36,097	13.2	
15,000 to 19,999	177,408	12.9		34,251	12.5	
20,000 to 24,999	200,303	14.6		30,325	11.1	
25,000 to 34,999	322,609	23.5		41,540	15.2	
35,000 to 49,000	218,415	15.9	47.7	27,783	10.2	28.6
50,000 or more	113,575	8.3		8,786	3.2	
Median Income	$24,167			$15,860		

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Michigan Census of Population: 1980, General Social and Economic Characteristics, PC 80-1-C24, Michigan.

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EMPLOYMENT

In the Detroit Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA), as well as the State of Michigan as a whole, nonwhite unemployment rates for the period 1970 through 1980 continue to be double, and in some cases triple, that of white unemployment. This trend appears to be consistent and rising for both nonwhite males and females (Table 6).

Table 6

Unemployment Rate for Adults 20 Years and Older
by Race and Sex, State of Michigan and Detroit SMSA, 1970-1980

Michigan Unemployment Rate

	Males		Females	
Year	White	Black & Other	White	Black & Other
1970	4.3	8.7	5.6	10.2
1971	5.2	9.0	5.5	15.1
1972	4.1	9.5	5.8	11.4
1973	3.0	9.7	4.6	12.6
1975	10.2	19.7	9.8	16.3
1976	6.6	9.5	9.4	15.8
1977	4.8	9.3	7.5	15.9
1978	3.8	9.1	6.2	14.1
1979	5.1	14.0	6.4	15.3
1980	10.9	24.9	9.3	17.9
Detroit SMSA Unemployment Rate				
1970	4.5	8.1	5.3	10.5
1971	5.0	9.7	5.1	13.3
1972	4.0	10.7	6.0	10.3
1973	3.0	9.5	4.4	10.4
1975	10.7	21.6	9.5	13.3
1976	6.1	10.1	8.6	13.6
1977	4.3	10.0	7.5	13.1
1978	2.8	9.8	5.8	16.0
1979	4.3	16.1	6.2	16.4
1980	10.1	29.0	9.0	20.9

Note: 1974 data not available

SOURCE: Wayne State University Bureau of Business Research. School of Business Administration. Michigan Statistical Abstract, Sixteenth Edition 1981, Detroit, Michigan.

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The labor force participation rates also reflect a higher rate for whites, both males and females, than the nonwhite population. Michigan's nonwhite male labor force participation rates fell from 83.5 percent in 1970 to 71.1 percent in 1981, a drop of 12.4 percentage points. The white male labor force participation rates fell from 82.8 to 80.1, only 2.7 percentage points. For the same period, the Michigan nonwhite female labor force participation rate fell from 51.5 to 48.4, a drop of 3.1 percentage points, while the white female labor force participation rate increased from 41.1 percent to 50.0 percent, an increase of 8.9 percentage points (Table 7).

Table 7

Labor Force Participation Rates by Race and Sex 20 Years and Older (Percent) State of Michigan 1970 - 1981

	1970	1975	1980	1981
Michigan				
Black & Other Races				
Males	83.5	73.1	71.1	71.1
Females	51.5	44.7	50.6	48.4
White				
Males	82.8	81.8	79.6	80.1
Females	41.1	44.4	49.6	50.0
Detroit SMSA				
Black & Other Races				
Males	83.9	73.2	67.7	69.8
Females	50.7	44.0	51.2	48.1
White				
Males	82.1	82.2	81.2	82.5
Females	39.1	42.4	48.8	49.2

SOURCE: 1. Wayne State University. Bureau of Business Research, School of Business Administration. Michigan Statistical Abstract, Sixteenth Edition, 1981, Detroit, Michigan.

2. Wayne State University. Bureau of Business Research, School of Business Administration. Michigan Statistical Abstract, Seventeenth Edition 1982-83, Detroit, Michigan.

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EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Between 1960 and 1970, the percentage of nonwhites finishing high school increased from 16.8 to 25.1; and by 1980, it had reached 31.1 percent (Table 8). A dramatic increase also occurred between 1960-1980 in the percentage of nonwhites completing four or more years of college (2.8 percent to 7.6 percent). This represents a 171 percent increase in 20 years. By 1980, both nonwhites and whites were completing a median of 12-plus years of schooling.

Table 8

Educational Attainment by Race of Persons 25 Years and Older
State of Michigan, 1960 - 1980

Percentage - Number of School Years Completed

	1960		1970		1980	
	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White
Elementary						
1-4	10.9	3.7	6.9	2.1	5.1[1]	1.7[1]
5-6 years	11.9	5.3	8.5	3.6		
7 years	8.3	5.6	5.6	3.5	15.4[2]	12.5[2]
8 years	16.1	19.7	11.3	13.8		
9-11 years	25.4	21.9	29.4	21.2	24.3[3]	16.0[3]
High School	16.8	26.9	25.1	34.7	31.1[4]	39.2[4]
College						
1-3 years	5.5	8.3	6.8	10.0	16.5	15.6
4 or more	2.8	7.2	4.7	9.9	7.6	14.9
Median School Years Completed	9.1	11.0	10.6	12.1	12.2	12.6

1. 0-4 years
2. 5 through 8 combined
3. 1-3 years high school
4. 4 years high school

SOURCE: Michigan State University Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration. Michigan Statistical Abstract, Fifteenth Edition, 1980, East Lansing, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. United States Census of Population: 1980, Volume 1, General Social and Economic Characteristics, PC 80-1-C24, Michigan.

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FAMILY COMPOSITION

Table 9 reflects the family composition of Michigan's black and white populations for the years 1970 and 1980. In 1970, 70 percent of the 219,942 black families were married couples. By 1980, however, there was a decrease from 70.0 percent to 53.4 percent in the number of black married couples. The comparable percentages for whites during this period showed a decrease from 89.1 percent to 86 percent. Families maintained by black women increased during the decade by 57,997 or 103.5 percent, compared to an increase of 72,460, or 45.5 percent, for white female-headed households.

Table 9

Family Composition by Race - Number and Percent
State of Michigan, 1970 and 1980

	1970			
	Black	%	White	%
Total Families	219,942		1,961,869	
Married Couple Families	153,876	70.0	1,748,809	89.1
Female Head (no husband present)	56,035	25.5	159,329	8.1

	1980			
	Black	%	White	%
Total Families	279,680		2,068,071	
Married Couple Families	149,454	53.4	1,795,765	86.0
Female Head (No husband present)	114,032	40.8	231,789	11.1

	Percentage Point Change 1970 - 1980			
	Black	%	White	%
Total Families	59,738	27.2	126,202	6.4
Married Couple Families	- 4,422	- 2.9	46,956	2.7
Female Head (no husband present)	57,997	103.5	72,460	45.5

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census. Census of Population: 1970, Detailed Characteristics, PC(1)-D24, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census. Census of Population: 1980, General Social and Economic Characteristics, PC80-1-C24, Michigan.

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LIFE EXPECTANCY

Between 1950 and 1981, nonwhite males gained 5.4 years of life expectancy (from 60.4 to 65.8), while nonwhite females gained 10 years (from 63.4 to 73.4) (Table 10). According to Mathey and Johnson, the 1981 rates are nearly double the rates for the early 1900s.[1] Whites, however, were still expected to live longer than nonwhites--the males to 71 years and the females to 77.5 years, according to 1981 figures.

Table 10

Life Expectancy at Birth by Race and Sex
State of Michigan, 1950-1981

	Nonwhite		White	
Year	Male	Female	Male	Female
1981	65.8	73.4	71.0	77.5
1980	65.3	73.3	70.9	77.5
1970	61.0	69.4	68.2	75.3
1960	63.6	67.7	67.2	74.0
1950	60.4	63.4	66.2	71.9

SOURCE: Michigan Department of Public Health, Office of Vital and Health Statistics. Michigan Health Statistics: 1981, Lansing.

1 Mathey, Jr., William C. and Johnson, Dwight L. "America's Black Population: 1970 to 1982 - A Statistical View." The Crisis 90:10 (December 1983), 10-18.

Infant Mortality Rates

Health care has generally improved for both blacks and whites in the last decade, but the infant mortality rate for blacks remains high. Although there was a consistent decrease in the rate of black infant deaths between the years 1972 and 1980, the rates for blacks in 1981 were still more than double those for whites (Table 11). In 1980, the Michigan infant mortality rate (IMR) for whites was 10.3 compared to 23.4 for blacks. This rate was higher than that of many less-developed countries. In Jamaica, the IMR was 16.2; Cuba, 19.3; Granada, 15.4; and Puerto Rico, 20.4.[1]

Table 11

Infant Deaths and Death Rate by Race for Selected Years
State of Michigan

	Infant Deaths		Infant Death Rate*	
Year	Black	White	Black	White
1981	582	1,261	25.6	10.9
1980	564	1,232	23.4	10.3
1978	579	1,344	25.1	11.8
1976	575	1,383	25.7	12.8
1975	616	1,574	26.5	14.3
1974	705	1,673	30.2	14.9
1973	796	1,749	30.9	15.2
1972	835	1,957	31.9	16.3
1970	811	2,662	30.0	18.5

*Per 1,000 live births

Note: IMR calculated using black and white total population figures

SOURCE: Michigan Department of Public Health Statistics. Office of Vital and Health Statistics, Michigan Health Statistics: 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1981, Lansing.

[1]Population Reference Bureau, Inc. 1982 World Population Data Sheet, 20th Edition, Washington, D. C., 1982.

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Leading Causes of Death

According to the Michigan Health Statistics, in 1981 the median age at death for nonwhites was 64 years, while for whites it was 73 years. The leading causes of death for specific age groups in Michigan varied among the four segments of the population: nonwhite females, white females, nonwhite males, and white males. The three leading causes of death for each age group and each category are presented in Table 12, together with figures indicating the percentage of total deaths from each cause accounted for by each segment of the population. (These percentages must be viewed in relation to the state population distribution by race: in 1980, whites constituted 85 percent; blacks, 12.9 percent; and other nonwhites, 2.1 percent.)

A major area of concern revealed by the data presented in Table 12 is the high incidence of homicide as a cause of death among nonwhites. Beginning with the 5-14 age group, homicide ranks second, behind accidents, for both male and female nonwhites, accounting for 73.1 percent of all homicide deaths in that age group in 1981. Homicide does not rank in the top three causes of death for white males or females in that age group. In the age groups of 15-24 and 25-34, homicide ranks first for both male and female nonwhites, accounting for 62.1 percent and 75.1 percent respectively of all homicide deaths in those age groups in 1981. Only in the 15-24 age group does homicide rank in the top three causes of death (3rd) for white males, and homicide never ranks in the top three causes of death for white females in any age group.

Table 12

The Three Leading Causes of Death and Percentages of Total Deaths for Each Cause by Age, Race, and Sex, State of Michigan, 1981

Age	Rank	Nonwhite Females	% of Total*	Rank	White Females	% of Total*	Age	Rank	Nonwhite Males	% of Total*	Rank	White Males	% of Total*
Under 1	1	Certain Diseases of Infancy	15.7	1	Certain Diseases of Infancy	26.7	Under 1	1	Certain Diseases of Infancy	20.2	1	Certain Diseases of Infancy	36.0
	2	Congenital Anomalies	8.4	2	Congenital Anomalies	37.6		2	Congenital Anomalies	9.3	2	Congenital Anomalies	42.5
	3	Heart Disease	9.4	3	Accidents	39.0		3	Accidents	19.5	3	Heart Disease	43.8
1 - 4	1	Accidents	9.0	1	Accidents	27.3	1 - 4	1	Accidents	16.7	1	Accidents	47.0
	2	Homicide	45.0	2	Cancer	17.7		2	Congenital Anomalies	7.9	2	Congenital Anomalies	52.6
	3	Congenital Anomalies	10.5	3	Congenital Anomalies	17.7		3	Pneumonia & Influenza	N.A.	3	Cancer	65.8
5 - 14	1	Accidents	5.2	1	Accidents	24.4	5 - 14	1	Accidents	11.3	1	Accidents	58.7
	2	Homicide	38.5	2	Cancer	32.9		2	Homicide	34.6	2	Cancer	64.0
	3	Cancer	6.6	3	Congenital Anomalies	57.1		3	Cancer	6.6	3	Heart Disease	83.3
15 - 24	1	Homicide	11.4	1	Accidents	20.4	15 - 24	1	Homicide	50.7	1	Accidents	74.8
	2	Accidents	1.1	2	Cancer	38.4		2	Accidents	3.5	2	Suicide	74.9
	3	Heart Disease	12.8	3	Suicide	13.7		3	Suicide	9.5	3	Homicide	25.8
25 - 34	1	Homicide	13.5	1	Accidents	16.6	25 - 34	1	Homicide	61.6	1	Accidents	66.9
	2	Cancer	3.3	2	Cancer	36.7		2	Accidents	11.7	2	Suicide	62.7
	3	Accidents	3.3	3	Suicide	21.3		3	Heart Disease	24.2	3	Cancer	47.9
35 - 49	1	Heart Disease	9.0	1	Cancer	47.1	35 - 49	1	Heart Disease	13.8	1	Heart Disease	62.8
	2	Cancer	7.9	2	Heart Disease	14.3		2	Homicide	N.A.**	2	Cancer	36.0
	3	Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	12.4	3	Accidents	22.6		3	Cancer	8.8	3	Accidents	60.7
							50 - 64	1	Heart Disease	9.5	1	Heart Disease	61.7
50 - 64	1	Cancer	7.0	1	Cancer	38.7		2	Cancer	9.3	2	Cancer	45.0
	2	Heart Disease	5.8	2	Heart Disease	22.7		3	Strokes	13.1	3	Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis	52.4
	3	Strokes	12.3	3	Strokes	34.9							
65 and over	1	Heart Disease	4.6	1	Heart Disease	46.3	65 and over	1	Heart Disease	4.2	1	Heart Disease	44.8
	2	Cancer	4.3	2	Cancer	41.8		2	Cancer	6.5	2	Cancer	47.2
	3	Strokes	9.5	3	Strokes	55.2		3	Strokes	3.9	3	Strokes	35.3

* Each percentage figure represents the percent of the total deaths for each cause by age, sex, and race. Percentages by sex and race do not always add to 100% because racial identification was sometimes omitted on records. These data should be viewed in relation to the state population distribution by race: In 1980, whites constituted 85 percent; blacks 12.9 percent; and other nonwhites, 2.1 percent.

** It was not possible to compute a percentage for homicide in the 35-49 age group. Homicides were the second leading cause of death for nonwhite males in that age group, but were not among the top five causes for the other groups.

Source: Michigan Department of Public Health, Office of Vital and Health Statistics, Michigan Health Statistics: 1981, Lansing, 1981 (percent of total deaths calculated from Table 2.8, pp. 124-135).

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Live Births and Birth Rates

The live birth rate for blacks decreased from 3.0 percent in 1970 to 2.6 percent in 1980 (Table 13). This represented a decrease of 13.3 percent in the birth rate. For the same period, the white live birth rate decreased from 16.2 percent to 12.9 percent, a decrease of 20.3 percent.

By 1981, the live birth rate for blacks had dropped still further to 2.4 percent per 1,000 population and the live birth rate for whites had dropped to 12.5 percent.

Table 13

Michigan Live Births, Birth Rate, Percentage of Total Births by Race, 1970 - 1982

Year	Total Live Births[1]	Black	Birth[2] Rate	% Total Births	White	Birth[2] Rate	% Total Births
1982	137,950	22,270	n.a.*	16.1%	113,868	n.a.*	82.5%
1981	140,579	22,705	2.4	16.2	115,972	12.5	82.5
1980	145,162	24,127	2.6	16.6	119,103	12.9	82.0
1979	144,452	24,010	2.6	16.6	118,671	12.8	82.2
1978	138,802	23,025	2.5	16.6	114,217	12.4	82.3
1977	138,416	23,195	2.5	16.8	114,042	12.5	82.4
1976	131,378	22,349	2.5	17.0	107,907	11.8	82.1
1975	133,931	23,224	2.5	17.3	109,718	12.0	81.9
1974	137,414	23,328	2.6	17.0	112,474	12.3	83.7
1973	141,550	25,741	2.8	18.2	114,878	12.7	81.2
1972	146,854	26,215	2.9	17.9	119,787	13.3	81.6
1971	162,244	26,245	3.0	16.2	134,165	15.0	82.7
1970	171,667	26,957	3.0	15.7	143,871	16.2	83.8

* Not available.
1. Includes other racial minorities.
2. Birth rate indicates number of live births per 1,000 population. Calculations were based on total population data in the 1982-83 Michigan Statistical Abstract, Table 1-2, p. 5.

SOURCE: Michigan Department of Public Health, Office of Vital and Health Statistics, Michigan Health Statistics: 1981 (Lansing, 1982).

Wayne State University Bureau of Business Research, School of Business Administration, Michigan Statistical Abstract, 17th Edition, 1982-83 Detroit.

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AGE COMPOSITION

In 1980, 40.3 percent of Michigan's black population were under the age of 19, and 6.8 percent were 65 years of age and older (Table 14). Of Michigan's white population, 32.5 percent were under the age of 19, and 10.3 percent were 65 years of age and older.

The age dependency ratio in Michigan for the black population was approximately 58.8 percent in 1980. This means that there were about 58.8 persons in the dependent ages (19 and under and over 65) for every 100 persons of working age in the black population.

Table 14

Age Composition by Race
State of Michigan, 1980

Total Population	Black 1,199,023			White 7,872,241		
	Number	%		Number	%	
0-4	110,550	9.2	40.3	552,415	7.0	32.5
5-9	125,717	10.5		579,689	7.4	
10-14	124,845	10.4		657,606	8.4	
15-19	122,723	10.2		759,726	9.7	
20-24	118,959	9.9		755,808	9.6	
25-29	108,840	9.1		678,249	8.6	
30-34	91,171	7.6		599,021	7.6	
35-39	66,441	5.5		485,095	6.2	
40-44	52,148	4.3		403,071	5.1	
45-49	51,206	4.3		386,944	4.9	
50-54	53,697	4.5		425,488	5.4	
55-59	50,010	4.2		416,501	5.3	
60-64	39,800	3.3		350,436	4.5	
65-69	32,655	2.7	6.8	284,124	3.6	10.3
70-74	22,136	1.8		213,062	2.7	
75-79	14,728	1.2		153,145	1.9	
80-84	7,772	0.6		96,353	1.1	
85+	5,625	0.5		75,508	1.0	

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. United States Census of Population: 1980. Vol. 1, General Population Characteristics, PC80-1-B24, Michigan.

Note: Percentages computed from Table 20, p. 24-70.

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Between 1950 and 1980, the median age of the black population was consistently younger than that of the white population (Table 15). In 1980, the median age for blacks was 24.9 and for whites, 29.6. The median age for black males in 1980 was 23.8, while for white males it was 28.6. For black females, the median age in 1980 was 25.8, while for white females it was 30.7. With respect to employment, the implications of this profile are alarming. A greater percentage of blacks are currently entering or about to enter the working population at the same time as the unemployment rate for blacks continues to exceed that for whites. This means that high unemployment, continued poverty level existence, and/or a life on welfare will not only continue but accelerate for many blacks and other minorities.

Table 15

Median Age by Race
State of Michigan, 1950-1980

	Males		Females		Both Sexes	
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White
1980	23.8	28.6	25.8	30.7	24.9	29.6
1970	21.9	26.0	23.2	27.7	22.6	26.9
1960	25.4	28.2	25.2	29.0	25.3	28.6
1950	29.1	30.1	28.0	29.8	28.5	30.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. United States Census of Population: 1980, General Population Characteristics, PC 80-1-B24, Michigan. Table 20, p. 24, 1969-70.

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SUMMARY

This demographic overview reflects life conditions for blacks in Michigan. In summary:

- The black population in Michigan has continued to grow, as indicated by an increase from 4 percent of the total population in 1940 to 12.9 percent of the total population in 1980.
- In 1980, the median income for black families was approximately two-thirds that of white families. The percent of black families earning less than $10,000 annually was almost three times that of white families. The percent of white families earning over $25,000 annually was more than one and one-half times that of black families.
- In seven of the years between 1970 and 1980, Michigan unemployment rates for black males were double those for white males. For black females, the unemployment rates were double those for white females in six of the years during the same time period.
- Although the statistics reflect gains in levels of formal educational achievement, a positive evaluation of these data must be tempered by the often reported high rates of illiteracy, regardless of grade level completed.

- Black married-couple families decreased between 1970 and 1980 while white married-couple families increased. Black female-headed households increased at a rate twice that of white female-headed households.
- The black infant mortality rate (IMR) in 1981 was twice that of whites and greater than the IMR in many underdeveloped countries in our hemisphere.
- In 1980, homicide was the major cause of death for both black males and females between the ages 15 and 34.
- The age composition profile indicates that high unemployment, continued poverty level existence, and/or a life on welfare will not only continue but accelerate for many blacks and other minorities.

Although we can cite isolated improvements in black life conditions, there is still a great deal to be accomplished before we can speak of realistic advances for Michigan's black citizens.

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Chapter 2

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF BLACKS IN MICHIGAN

Karl D. Gregory

For this first report in a series of publications on the status of blacks in Michigan, an overall summary will be presented of where blacks are: their level, distribution, and sources of income; labor market participation; and wealth and business development. Subsequent chapters and future reports in this series will expand on some of the topics addressed here. The review will also discuss several implications for private and public policy.

For this section of the report, reliance is largely placed by necessity on data from the Bureau of the Census. Some of the data on the 1980 decennial census are not scheduled to be released until later in 1984 and in 1985. The census undercount of blacks may lead to findings that understate the harsh realities in which a growing number of blacks find themselves. Moreover, since the census of 1980, the nationwide recession has produced a depression in Michigan with horrendous impacts on the black population and the poor. Before these groups had recovered from the 1975 recession and from the severe adjustments confronting the auto industry, they were hit again by another downturn in 1980 through 1982.

THE BLACK POPULATION AND ITS CONCENTRATION

There were 1.2 million blacks in Michigan in 1980. This constituted 4.5 percent of all blacks in the United States and 12.9 percent of the 9.3 million persons in the state. At 9.4 percent of the state's population in 1960, the black population ratio has been growing by 1.7 percentage points in each of the last two decades (Table 1).

Table 1

The Population in Michigan, by Race
1960 - 1980 (000)

Population	1960	1970	1980
Total in state:	7,823	8,875	9,262
White	7,086	7,843	7,872
Black	737[1]	991	1,199
Percentage of total	9.4	11.2	12.9
Urban residents:			
White	5,039	5,562	5,231
Black	687	960	1,167
White, percent of whites in state	64.4	70.9	66.5
Black, percent of blacks in state	93.2	96.9	97.3

[1]Includes other nonwhites for 1960 only.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of Population: 1970, General Social and Economic Characteristics, PC (1)-C24, Michigan.

U.S. Census of Population, 1980, V. 1, General Population Characteristics, PC80-1B24, Michigan.

Virtually all blacks (97.3 percent) live in urban areas of the state. In contrast, only two-thirds of whites live in these areas. Further, the black concentration in urban areas has been increasing modestly, while the absolute number of whites in these areas declined in the 1970s, as they migrated to rural areas in the state and out-of-state.

Blacks are concentrated in particular urban areas, notably the six-county Detroit Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) which includes Wayne County. Almost three-quarters of all blacks in the state were located in the Detroit SMSA in 1980, and 69 percent were in Wayne County. When the Flint SMSA is added, four-fifths of all blacks in the state are included in these two SMSA's.[1]

Blacks accounted for 20.5 percent of the population of the Detroit SMSA in 1980, a percentage that has been rising by 3.1 percentage points in each of the last two decades (Table 2).

Table 2

The Black Percentage of the Population for the Detroit SMSA and Wayne County, 1960, 1970, 1980

Item	Detroit SMSA	Wayne County
Blacks as a percent of the total population		
1960	14.2%	19.9%
1970	17.2	27.0
1980	20.5	35.5
Average decennial increase	3.1	7.8

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 1982.

In Wayne County, blacks were 35.5 percent of the population in 1980, having increased their proportion by about 7.8 percentage points in each of the preceding two decades. There are important implications of these trends on the distribution of political power and on an expanded black economic presence. How significant that larger presence will be depends on the use of the ballot, on the income and wealth of blacks, and on the wisdom with which all three factors are leveraged.

THE LEVEL, DISTRIBUTION, AND SOURCES OF INCOME

The best single indicator of the level of economic well-being of single individuals or of a group of persons living together is income. This determines how much one can spend, save, and invest. People can spend more than their incomes if they have wealth to draw on, if they can borrow funds, or if they have income-in-kind such as food stamps, medicaid, housing, or other subsidies that are not in the form of cash, but rather in goods.

Median Income

The median income for black households was $13,695 in 1979, the last date for which such data are available on a disaggregated basis for the state. This was 66.6 percent of the median income of white households in that year (Table 3).

Table 3

Income Distribution and Ratio of Black to White Michigan Households, 1979

	The State	White	Black	Black to White Ratio
No. of households (000)	2,765	1,896	388	-
Median income, $	19,983	20,568	13,695	.67
Mean income, $	22,801	23,657	16,896	.71
Ranges of Income; Percents of Households by Race; Ratios				
Less than $5,000	9.9 %	9.8 %	21.9 %	2.2
$5,000 to $7,499	6.9	6.7	10.3	1.5
$7,500 to $9,999	6.7	6.4	7.8	1.2
$10,000 to $14,999	13.0	12.5	13.1	1.0
$15,000 to $19,999	13.5	13.0	12.6	1.0
$20,000 to $24,999	13.4	13.1	10.5	.8
$25,000 to $34,999	19.1	19.4	13.0	.7
$35,000 to 49,999	11.7	12.6	8.1	.6
$50,000 or more	5.6	6.5	2.6	.4

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Characteristics of the Population, Section 1 of 2, PC80-1-C24, Aug. 1983, p. 136.

Blacks were 14.0 percent of all households in the state but received only 10.4 percent of all money income.[2] This percentage excludes purchasing power from borrowing, cashing in on wealth, engaging in the underground economy--that is, illegitimate activities--and income-in-kind. Although estimates of these are not available by state, national data suggest that the impact upon the analysis would be in degreee, but not in the

direction of the conclusions, for some of these omissions either have offsetting biases or appear across racial groups.

Income Distribution

The distribution of income can be analyzed by reviewing the percent of households at each of several ranges of income (Table 3). As the income scale descends below $10,000, increasing proportions of black households fall in each income class. Over twice as large a proportion of blacks as whites are in the lowest income class, that below $5,000. In the income classes between $10,000 and $20,000, approximately equal ratios of both races are present. Above these income classes, black representation falls short. In the highest income class, that above $50,000, the proportion of whites is 2.5 times that of blacks. Among the reasons for these differences are educational and job skill levels, experience on the job, health status, location in areas with poor public transportation and declining firms, skills in job search, family size and composition, nepotism and networking processes, institutions for transferring and taxing wealth, and current and/or past discrimination, not necessarily in that order.

Sources of Income

The identification of the sources of income and the level of income from each source is critical for understanding some of the dynamics of income generation and for formulating comprehensive strategies and tactics for promoting racial progress. Although these objectives are beyond our scope, the insights will nonetheless be useful. In 1980,

about 73 percent of black and 82 percent of white households received income from earnings, averaging $19,000 for blacks and $24,000 for whites (Table 4). Wage and salary income provided most of these earnings.

Table 4

Households and the Sources of Their Income, Michigan, 1980

Item	White Number (000)	White Percent	Black Number (000)	Black Percent
No. of households	1,896	100.0	388	100.0
With earnings	1,551	81.8	283	73.0
Mean earnings, $	24.5	-	19.0	-
With wage or salary income	1,513	79.8	280	72.3
Mean such income $	23.8	-	18.8	-
With nonfarm self-employment income	140	7.4	10	2.6
Mean such income $	14.1	-	10.1	-
With farm self-employment income	11	0.6	1	0.2
Mean such income $	2.9	-	2.1	-
With interest, dividends, or rental income	952	50.2	53	13.6
Mean such income, $	2.6	-	1.2	-
With Social Security income	447	25.2	85	21.8
Mean such income, $	4.4	-	4.0	-
With public assistance income	129	6.8	104	26.9
Mean such income, $	3.0	-	3.5	-
With all other income	555	29.3	117	30.1
Mean all other income, $	3.4	-	3.5	-

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Characteristics of the U.S. Population, Section 1 of 2, General Social and Economic Characteristics, PC80-1-C24, August 1983, Vol. 24-126.

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Very few blacks had earnings from farm or nonfarm self-employment. Proportionally, whites were almost three times as well represented in these income sources and earned higher average amounts.

Two sources of income give rise to great contrasts and are pregnant with policy implications: income from capital, such as interest, dividends, and rent; and public assistance. Nearly four times as large a proportion of whites as of blacks had income from capital. The average amounts received were over twice as much for whites. Almost 27 percent of black households received income from public assistance, as compared to about 7 percent for whites. In addition, black households getting such assistance obtained an average of $3,500, or 17 percent more than the average for whites. This is consistent with blacks having a greater average deficit below the poverty threshold than whites.

The modest average sum received by both races from public assistance raises the question of how such households survive, even with some overlapping of benefits from different government transfer programs. The data also confront a stereotype with regard to the predominant beneficiaries of the public assistance program. A larger number of white households than black ones obtained assistance, and they received a greater total sum of money.

These circumstances point to the urgency of strengthening public assistance and business development programs and of finding remedies for generating greater self-sufficiency. They also call into question the appropriateness of the substantial budget cuts in recent years at

the federal and state levels of government. For example, public assistance benefit levels in dollars of constant purchasing power are currently budgeted in the state at levels below those for 1979.

Poverty

Still another approach to analyzing encroachments on the level of well-being is to view the number of persons below the poverty level. This threshold is defined by the federal government and varies from year to year depending on inflation and other factors. The threshold for a family of four in 1981 was $9,287 and was increased to $9,862 in 1982, almost three times the average public assistance amount per household in Michigan, as reported above.

The number of persons below the poverty level rose nationally for the third year in a row to 34.4 million in 1982. Among the factors contributing to the rise were the recession, increased unemployment and the tightening of eligibility standards for certain government aid programs, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children. Poverty rates rose nationally in 1982 to 35.6 percent for blacks and 12.0 for whites. According to the Bureau of the Census, much of the increase was in central cities. The City of Detroit had the highest rate (30.6 percent) among the central cities in the nation's 20 largest SMSA's in 1981, the year of the most recent data. Only Philadelphia (26.5 percent), New York (21.7 percent), and Chicago (20.1 percent) came close to Detroit's rate of 30.6 percent. The increase in national poverty rates in recent years holds even after adding income-in-kind to money income.

Family characteristics are one key to understanding differences in poverty rates. The census data for 1979 must be used for trends in the state and for a classification by family type, even though these data understate the currently higher poverty rates. Between the last two decennial censuses, white poverty rates remained roughly constant, while the rate for blacks rose by 16 percent to 25.8 percent, more than three times the rate for whites (Table 5).

Table 5

Percent of Persons Below the Poverty Level,* by Family Status, Aged 65 and over, and by Race in Michigan, 1969, 1979

Age and Family Status	All		White		Black	
	1969	1979	1969	1979	1969	1979
Persons in poverty status	9.4	10.4	7.8	7.9	22.2	25.8
65 years and older	24.1	12.2	23.0	10.9	36.4	23.5
In Families	7.4	8.7	5.7	6.2	20.6	24.3
Female householder, no husband present	28.8	30.7	22.5	23.8	46.6	43.9
Unrelated individuals	35.6	24.1	35.0	21.9	39.2	36.0
65 years and older	49.8	26.0	48.4	23.8	66.1	45.1

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Characteristics of the Population, 1980, Section 1 of 2, V. 24-108.

*The poverty threshold for a family of four in the U.S. was $9,862 in 1982, $9,287 in 1981.

For both races, the percentage of persons aged 65 and over in poverty declined from 1970 to 1980. Social Security benefit levels had increased significantly over the 1970s. The white rate halved, while for blacks, the decline was a more modest one-third. For both races

also, the poverty rate for families rose in the decade, and by a larger percent for blacks (whites, 5.7 to 6.2; blacks, 20.6 to 24.3).

The most important finding is the often recognized high poverty rates for female householders with no husband present (1980: white, 23.8; black, 43.9), followed by those for unrelated individuals (1980: white, 21.9; black, 36.0). Policy-makers should know that almost half of the persons in poverty were related children below 18 years of age. Budget cuts that deprive these children of their human development can lead to greater public expenditures in the future. These deprived youth may engage in crime, become wards of the public, or otherwise impact on the public purse. Budget cuts can be immediately penny-wise but ultimately pound-foolish, as the intended savings turn instead into much greater public outlays.

Intercity Comparison

These variables related to income and poverty of black households differ by urbanized area in the state. The highest median incomes are received by households in Flint, Lansing, Ann Arbor, Saginaw, Detroit, and Battle Creek in that order (Table 6). Ann Arbor, Jackson, and Lansing have the lowest proportion of households in poverty, while Benton Harbor, Port Huron, Muskegon, Saginaw, and Kalamazoo have the highest proportion in poverty.

Table 6

Black Households in Urbanized Areas in Michigan, Their Median Income, Percent Below Poverty Level, and Total Money Income, 1979[1]

Urbanized Area	Number	Median Income	Percent Below Poverty Level	Total Income(000)[2]
Ann Arbor	8,848	$15,621	17.2%	$163,502
Battle Creek[3]	3,408	13,528	20.5	54,719
Bay City	323	13,839	26.8	111,473
Benton Harbor	5,717	9,469	37.0	69,763
Detroit[3]	291,054	13,683	23.5	4,915,902
Flint[3]	24,010	17,858	21.2	475,254
Grand Rapids[3]	9,683	12,419	25.9	152,469
Jackson	2,347	13,121	18.4	37,756
Kalamazoo	4,894	12,001	27.7	73,767
Lansing[3]	7,171	15,737	19.1	130,677
Muskegon[3]-Muskegon Heights	5,313	10,608	28.1	71,800
Port Huron	856	8,364	28.2	13,277
Saginaw	10,832	14,041	27.9	177,883

[1]All of these data are based on a sample and therefore are subject to sampling errors.

[2]Estimated by multiplying the number of households and the mean income. Small sampling errors can produce large errors in the estimate of income.

[3]These along with Pontiac are the urbanized areas with an Urban League Affiliate. Pontiac is included in the Detroit area and hence is not shown separately.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Characteristics of the Population, 1980, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Section 1 of 2, Michigan V. 24-320 to 328.

Total Money Income

Despite a pattern of low income, blacks as a group nevertheless command a significant amount of income. By multiplying the mean income per household by the number of black households, a rough estimate of total money income can be made. This is subject to large sampling errors, but is still useful as a rough order of magnitude. By this measure, black households in Michigan had $6,5 billion of money income in 1979, compared to $63.0 billion for white households. Over $500 million of income was received by black households with $50,000 or more in income.[3] These were primarily two-earner households. About $5,0 billion of the black money income belonged to households in the Detroit urbanized area. Unfortunately, the Census Bureau does not provide data on household liabilities so that the income data can be adjusted to arrive at that above subsistance needs and after retiring current obligations.

PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOR MARKET

One major way to improve the income of blacks is through greater employment. This is more easily said than done. Doing so requires substantial public programs, the cooperation of the private sector, and a sustained and vigorous economic recovery. One or two of these factors will not be sufficient. All three are necessary.

The first challenge is to improve the participation of blacks in the labor market. This requires a large number of jobs with skill requirements matching those of the unemployed, those of persons not in the labor force because they have given up hope of finding a job (the

discouraged workers), and those of new entrants or reentrants to the job market. Alternatively, education and training can be provided to upgrade skills to match jobs that become available. Both approaches are necessary.

Labor Force Participation Rates

The labor force participation rate is defined as the sum, divided by a relevant age group, of those persons who are employed and those who are seeking work. Here, we focus on persons aged 20 years and older, to exclude momentarily the teenage group that has special, exacerbated problems. The labor force participation rate for nonwhite males in Michigan was 83.5 percent in 1970 and fell by 12.4 points to 71.1 percent in 1981 (Table 7). This reflects the dropping out of the labor force by discouraged workers, an experience shared only slightly by white males.

Table 7

Labor Force Participation Rates (percent) by Race and Sex, 20 Years and Older, Michigan and Detroit SMSA, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1981

	1970	1975	1980	1981
Michigan				
Black & other races				
Males	83.5	73.1	71.1	71.1
Females	51.5	44.7	50.6	48.4
White				
Males	82.8	81.8	79.6	80.1
Females	41.1	44.4	49.6	50.1
Detroit SMSA				
Black & other races				
Males	83.9	73.2	67.7	69.8
Females	50.7	44.0	51.2	48.1
White				
Males	82.1	82.2	81.2	82.5
Females	39.1	42.4	48.8	49.2

Source: Bureau of Business Research, Wayne State University: Michigan Statistical Abstracts, 1981, 1982-83, p. 139-140.

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The participation rate for nonwhite females in Michigan has been very sensitive to recessions. It was 51.5 percent in 1970 and fell to 44.7 percent in 1975. It rose again by 1980 to 50.6 percent and dropped to 48.1 percent in 1981. White females increased their labor force participation in the decade of the 1970s, moving from 41.1 percent in 1970 to 50.1 percent in 1981, and absorbing a large number of jobs. Some of this increase may have been at the expense of jobs for blacks. However, a well functioning economy should provide jobs within a reasonable period of time for all who seek them.

Unemployment Rates

The disproportionate discouragement of blacks from the labor force results from their high unemployment rates and the lack of jobs (Table 8).

Table 8

Unemployment Rates by Race, Persons 16 and Over, Michigan, Detroit SMSA, and the City of Detroit (Percent) 1967-1982

Year	Michigan			Detroit SMSA			City of Detroit		
	Total	White	Nonwhite	Total	White	Nonwhite	Total	White	Nonwhite
1967	4.1	3.3	11.0	4.5	3.2	10.9	5.2	2.9	9.8
1968	3.9	3.4	8.2	3.8	3.0	7.5	5.1	3.9	7.3
1969	4.0	3.5	7.6	4.1	3.2	7.9	5.5	3.9	8.5
1970	6.7	6.1	12.2	6.4	6.1	11.4	8.1	6.1	11.9
1971	7.6	6.9	13.9	7.5	7.3	13.9	9.4	7.5	14.2
1972	7.0	6.1	14.9	6.9	6.2	15.4	8.9	7.7	15.4
1973	5.8	4.8	14.2	5.4	4.9	13.4	6.9	6.6	12.1
1974	7.4	6.6	14.3	6.8	6.8	13.9	8.5	7.8	13.7
1975	12.5	11.5	21.0	11.7	11.7	20.6	14.5	14.5	20.5
1976	9.4	8.8	14.2	8.9	8.2	14.1	11.1	11.3	15.0
1977	8.2	7.3	15.9	7.9	6.7	13.8	9.9	6.9	13.9
1978	6.9	5.9	14.4	6.6	5.6	11.7	8.3	5.8	11.7
1979	7.8	6.5	16.3	7.8	5.7	17.5	10.3	5.0	17.6
1980	12.6	11.1	23.4	13.1[1]	9.9[1]	26.3[1]	16.5[1]	8.5[1]	26.8[1]
1981	12.3	10.6	26.8	12.9[1]	9.6[1]	27.7[1]	15.7[1]	7.1[1]	28.0[1]
1982	15.5	13.3	33.3[2]	16.2	12.9	33.6[2]	26.9	16.2	33.7[2]
Unemployment Rates for Black Persons Aged 16-19									
1981	25.5	22.3	63.1	26.7	20.8	63.0	33.3	16.1	63.2

[1]Estimates based on Michigan Current Population Survey data, 1965-1983.

[2]Blacks only, not other nonwhites.

Source: Michigan Employment Security Commission, Research and Statistics Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, annually, 1968 to 1983.

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Prior to 1981, rates were shown for "nonwhites," not just blacks, but a combination of blacks and other races. However, blacks constituted over 90 percent of the group. For the 16-year period shown for the state, the Detroit SMSA, and the City of Detroit, the unemployment rate for nonwhites was a single digit for only two years, 1968 and 1969 (also 1967 for the City of Detroit). The rate for whites was a single digit between 1967 and 1979 except for 1975 (1976 also, for the City of Detroit).

With few exceptions, the rate for nonwhites was about two to three times higher than the rate for whites. It was at its highest multiple in the earlier years when the white unemployment rate was around three percent and in the most recent years as nonwhites have been impacted more catastrophically. The rates for nonwhites in all three areas shown for 1981 and 1982, at 27 to more than 33 percent, exceeded that for the nation as a whole in the depths of the Great Depression. It is likely that if the white population were to have experiences with unemployment on the sustained and calamitous basis that blacks have had, there would be either a revolution or at least massive and widely spread disturbances.

The circumstances are even more alarming for nonwhite teenagers. In 1981, the unemployment rate for nonwhites aged 16 to 19 in all three geographic areas was about 63 percent (Table 8). This already high rate would become even higher when adjusted to include teenagers who would have sought a job if they had reason to believe there was a chance of obtaining one. Many of these young people are in female headed families

that rely partly on their meager earnings when they can find jobs. Many blacks and other minorities go through young adulthood never having had a job experience. This will plague them through their entire working lives, unless public policy choices effectively address this matter. It may also plague their children.

It is ironic that the unemployment status of blacks has led to a U.S. Army that is about one-third black in a country with a black population of about 12 percent of the total. The army has become a route for many black persons to avoid becoming permanently in the underclass. Black enlistment and reenlistment rates have been quite high, as compared to those for whites who have greater opportunities in civilian endeavors. It says something about the character of a society when it gives some of its citizens the choice of either risking their lives to defend it or being unemployed.

Intercity Comparison

Substantial variations occur in Michigan's cities in their labor market performance rates. Generally, high labor force participation rates are associated with relatively low unemployment rates and high proportions of persons over 25 years of age who are high school graduates (Table 9). The cities with the best relative performance have large universities--Ann Arbor, Lansing, and Ypsilanti--or a stable economy with large expanding firms and a balanced industrial mix, as Grand Rapids. Both of these findings support Governor Blanchard's policy initiatives on strengthening appropriations for higher education and for programs to attract and retain firms in Michigan.

Table 9

All Persons 16 Years and Over, the Civilian Labor Force and the Unemployment Rate, Percent of Persons 25 Years or Older Who Are High School Graduates, Selected Jurisdictions, 1980

Jurisdiction	Persons 16 & Older, Civilian Labor Force: Total (000)	Number (000)	%	% Unemployed	% of Persons 25 Yrs. & Older High Sch. Grads.
The State	6,873.4	4,212.0	61.3	11.0	68.0
CITIES					
Ann Arbor[1]	89.9	57.5	64.0	4.1	90.7
Battle Creek	26.6	14.9	56.1	11.4	60.0
Benton Harbor	8.8	4.7	53.6	31.9	40.1
Detroit	880.4	484.2	55.0	18.5	54.2
Flint	114.8	66.2	57.7	18.2	60.5
Grand Rapids	138.5	85.8	62.0	8.5	67.1
Jackson	29.6	17.5	59.1	11.4	63.0
Kalamazoo	63.9	38.2	59.8	7.9	73.4
Lansing	96.6	64.3	66.6	9.2	72.6
Muskegon	30.7	16.4	53.5	11.2	59.2
Muskegon Hgts	10.2	5.2	51.3	18.3	47.6
Pontiac	53.8	31.2	57.9	15.2	52.2
Saginaw	55.3	30.1	54.4	19.0	57.6
Ypsilanti[1]	19.8	12.2	61.7	10.1	71.7

[1]Contains a large university.

Source: Bureau of the Census, Summary Characteristics for Government Units and Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Michigan, PHC80-3-24, Table 3, 1982.

WEALTH

Persons with wealth that can be converted into cash can withstand a temporary loss of income. Wealth is also associated with political power, freedom of choice in numerous respects, independence and self-determination, contributions to strengthening governmental tax bases, dignity, and respect.

Wealth is generated by the process of capital formation, saving from one's income or acquiring funds from friends and relatives, leveraging these with borrowed funds and investing successfully in assets including business enterprises. The practice of thrift is essential. This in turn requires the earning of income in excess of the requirements for survival. Thrift is helped by training in the skills of wise consumption choices and control through personal budgeting. The church and educational institutions could play a major role in promoting consumer effectiveness.

The inequality in the distribution of wealth exceeds that for income and employment. This is in part due to the head start many persons from wealthy families obtain, the reduction in the progressivity of the combined federal, state, and local tax systems, and the recent substantial lowering of the effective tax rates on estate and gift taxes. All of these forces tend to maintain the existing distribution of wealth.

Relative to whites, blacks as a group do not command much wealth. Their holdings are largely in the form of home ownership and church property, neither of which, despite having great benefits in

other respects, generate much employment, economic power, or property income. There are, however, some blacks with modest wealth. Through 1979 there was an increasing black middle-class whose investment expertise was growing, along with their demand deposit and savings accounts and other assets. Since 1979, the middle class has also been impacted negatively by the economic downturn.

With regard to wealth in the form of housing, almost two-thirds of all year-round housing units in Wayne County in 1980 were owner-occupied. They had a median value of $32,600 in 1980 (Table 10).

Table 10

Total and Black Owner-Occupied Year-Round Housing Units, 1980, Detroit SMSA and Wayne County

Area	Total	All Owner-Occupied			Black Owner-Occupied	
	(1,000)	Total (1,000)	%	Median Value	Total (1,000)	%
Detroit SMSA	1,588.1	1,075.2	71.2	$52,500	293.3	52.8
Wayne County	874.6	547.9	66.5	32,600	274.5	52.6

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, State and Metropolitan Area Data Book, 1982, p. 101.

Assuming that the 274,500 homes owned and occupied by black householders in the county had a value of 70 percent of the countywide average, one gets a crude estimate of $6.3 billion as the gross value of black owner-occupied homes. To obtain an estimate of the equity in these homes, an unknown value of the mortgages and land-contracts outstanding would have to be subtracted. Whatever the exact value of the equity, it is clearly substantial.

While there are also no data on the value of black-owned churches, a few conservative estimates might be made. The existence in the state of 2,000 such churches with an average value of $300,000 per church would result in $600 million. To arrive at the equity in churches, one must subtract the mortgages on which church property is pledged. Since many churches are owned free and clear, and since banks generally will not lend more than 70 percent of market value, there is perhaps $400 million of such equity.

The challenge for the community is to design an overall economic development plan that ministers and church members, the nonchurch-attending middle class, and other householders will buy into and support through various means including pledging their churches and homes as collateral. These investments could be leveraged with matching funds from foundations, Urban Development Action Grants, and funds from pensions and other sources. The risks could be controlled by diversifying the investments and by careful management. The meeting of this challenge would place Michigan and its black community on the forefront of social change in the country.

Black-Owned Firms

The Department of Commerce surveys minority-owned business firms every five years for the years ending in 2 and 7. The analysis of the data for 1982 is due in 1985; hence, the analysis of the data for 1977 is the most recent. Of the 8,498 black-owned firms in 1977, almost 80 percent had no paid employees. Those firms with employees declined from 1969 to 1977 by almost 20 percent to 1,720 such firms in the latter

year (Table 11). Most of this loss was the result of undercapitalization combined with the devastation of such businesses in the oil embargo-related depression of 1975.

Table 11

Black-Owned Firms in Michigan, by Industry
1969 and 1977[1]

Industry	All Firms Number 1977	Only Firms with Paid Employees Number 1969	1977	Gross Receipts (000) 1969 (000)	1977 (000)	Employees 1969	1977
Construction	575	182	114	$19,572	$8,999	751	193
Manufacturing	92	48	36	12,056	22,075	338	407
Transportation and public utilities	787	108	105	7,106	10,311	379	316
Wholesale trade	60	28	15	W	75,182	W	458
Retail trade	2,201	1,087	671	115,985	171,856	3,834	2,760
Finance, insurance and real estate	489	86	56	5,367	12,510	453	291
Selected services	3,956	470	688	23,704	51,527	2,267	2,499
Other industries	119	18	26	W	W	W	W
Industries not classified	219	112	9	7,546	W	268	W
State total	8,498	2,139	1,720	234,827	354,190	8,776	6,953

W Withheld to avoid disclosing figures for individual companies.

[1] These data are estimates and have several limitations. Different procedures were used in 1977 than in 1969. Moreover, the data, although the most recent available, are now seven years old. The figures for 1982 will not be published until 1985.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1972 and the 1977 Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises, 1974 and 1979.

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The 1982 data should reflect the business failures resulting from the early part of the 1981 and 1982 depression. The horrendous stimulus for business failure in 1981 and 1982 was rivaled by a similar devastating force in the 1950s, when a group of all-white decision makers decided that Hastings Street, then the hub of a vibrant and prosperous black business community in Detroit, was the best location for the Chrysler Freeway. This killed numerous businesses that had taken decades to build, destroyed communities, and confirmed the fear black leadership has in decision making by all-white groups. Such decision making usually promotes white interests and sacrifices those of blacks.

Almost 80 percent of the black-owned firms in 1977 were in retail trade or "selected services" (see Table 11). Very few were in manufacturing, wholesale trade, and "finance, insurance, and real estate."

Although the number of black-owned firms declined from 1972 to 1977, their gross receipts rose by 50.9 percent to $354.2 million. Unfortunately, this rise was more than cancelled by the increase in inflation of 63.1 percent in the same period, as measured by the consumer price index for Michigan.

These firms employed 6,953 persons in 1977 or an average of four persons per firm for those firms with employees. There is obviously a potential for numerous jobs with the growth of adequately capitalized and well run black-owned firms.

Despite the average gross receipts of only $27,600 for the 8,500 black-owned firms, there are nevertheless some firms of substantial size. Black Enterprise lists among its top 100 black non-financial firms ten

Michigan firms. These had gross receipts totaling $179.4 million (Table 12). Eight are automobile dealerships, one is a manufacturing concern, and one is a fast food restaurant. To these large organizations should be added a bank, a savings and loan association, an insurance company, and several other eligible companies that did not respond to the Black Enterprise survey.

Table 12

Michigan Firms in Black Enterprise's Top 100 in the U.S., 1983

Firm in 1983	Rank in Top 100	Year Started	Staff	Sales $(000)	Type of Business
The Barfield Companies Ypsilanti	80	1955	530	10,400	MANUFACTURER AUTO PARTS
Jim Bradley Pontiac-Cadillac-GMC, Inc. Ann Arbor	94	1973	42	9,301	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
Al Bennett Ford, Inc. Flint	45	1979	60	17,308	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
Conyers Ford, Inc. Detroit	71	1970	61	11,330	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
Mel Farr Ford, Inc. Oak Park	52	1975	60	14,500	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
Dick Harris Cadillac, Inc. Detroit	48	1978	60	16,231	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
Keys Group Co. Detroit	89	1967	485	9,632	FAST FOOD RESTAURANT
Porterfield Wilson Pontiac-GMC Detroit	13	1970	100	40,000	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
Porterfield Wilson Mazda, Inc. Detroit	15	1979	71	33,000	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
Woodruff Oldsmobile, Inc. Detroit	42	1978	60	17,700	AUTOMOBILE SALES/SERVICE
BANK				Assets $(000)	
First Independence National Bank of Detroit	8	1970	56	61,019	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION
SAVINGS AND LOAN					
Home Federal Savings & Loan Association, Detroit	15	1947	15	21,438	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION
LIFE INSURANCE					
Wright Mutual Insurance Company, Detroit	20	1942	45	4,003	FINANCIAL INSTITUTION

Source: Black Enterprise, Volume 14, No. 11, June 1984, pp. 93 ff.

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The largest reported black company headquartered in the state is Porterfield Wilson Pontiac-GMC Truck, Inc. It ranked 13th in the Black Enterprise Top 100 and had sales of 40.0 million. The firm ranking first in the Top 100 for 11 of the last 12 years was headquartered in Michigan during its early years, but moved to California. Motown had annual sales of $108 million. There is a possibility that Michigan will once again have the largest single black-owned firm by the end of this decade. If current projections are realized, Barden Cablevision of Detroit may be in that position or close to it.

The success of black auto dealerships in the state illustrates factors that should be applied in other industries. A major force behind the progress among black dealerships was Rev. Leon Sullivan's pressure from the inside as a director of General Motors. Other auto companies followed GM's lead. Some capital was provided by the auto companies and by several minority enterprise small business investment corporations (MESBIC), including those organized by Detroit's Inner City Business Improvement Forum (ICBIF), which is supported by both New Detroit and the U.S. Office of Minority Business Enterprise. Three factors are of key importance in expediting racial progress in business development: committed blacks working in top positions of large corporations, positive organizational responses by white corporate leadership, and access to high risk venture capital--in this case, MESBIC's. Unfortunately, many corporations still do not have blacks in high-ranking positions. Also, the venture capital funds of ICBIF's MESBIC have been exhausted and need to be replenished.

Omitted from the trinity of success factors is the supply of able and willing entrepreneurs. Two decades ago there were major efforts to increase the then exceedingly low numbers of blacks in business schools across the country. Many of the beneficiaries of these efforts joined the staffs of large corporations and rose to the level that blacks are permitted. Some are now disenchanted, for they know they have risen as far as they can. They are seeking to develop their own businesses, but are caught up by the dearth of venture capital.

Three other factors have to be added to the trinity: support by both the white and black community, increased availability of surety bonds, and access to short-term capital. The profitability of black-owned firms has not been discussed, for there are no data on this matter. Yet this is a very important measure of performance.

Firms by SMSA

As in much else, the Detroit SMSA dominated the data on black-owned firms (Table 13). In 1977, it accounted for 6,289 firms in the state and for $382.9 million in gross receipts. Ranking next were Flint, Grand Rapids, and Ann Arbor.

Table 13

Black-Owned Firms in Michigan, by SMSA, 1977, and in the Detroit SMSA, 1969

SMSA*	1977 No. of Firms	1977 Gross Receipts ($1,000)	Firms with Paid Employees Number	Payroll ($1,000)	Gross Receipts ($1,000)
Ann Arbor	225	10,212	34	1,273	8,925
Battle Creek	128	3,525	24	534	2,751
Detroit	6,289	382,933	1,342	51,504	307,178
Flint	498	13,959	90	1,814	10,304
Grand Rapids	257	6,394	44	584	3,958
Kalamazoo-Portage	190	3,830	26	454	2,133
Lansing-E. Lansing	160	3,959	27	454	2,594
Saginaw	163	6,668	33	446	4,809
SMSA		1969			
Detroit	5,442	227,494	1,708	7,240	199,436

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Minority Owned Enterprises-Black, 1969, 1977.

*Data for Jackson not available in the source.

The payroll of these firms in the Detroit SMSA expanded sevenfold from 1969 to 1977. Adjusted for inflation, this was over a sixfold expansion. Maintaining this rate of growth in the future will be a difficult task without resolving the bottlenecks of venture capital, short term working capital, and surety bonding.

PUBLIC SECTOR POLICY

Economic progress for blacks will not occur on a large scale without ample support from the public sector. This is not to deny the important role that self-help and the private sector must also play. However, it is in the public sector that substantial threats to maintaining past progress arise.

Federal

At the national level of government, the requirements for black progress include vigorous affirmative action programs with adequate staffing, widely based minority business development support, manpower and human resource development thrusts, a more adequate safety net, an urban and an industrial policy, and most important of all, a sustained economic recovery that reaches into the inner cities of our nation. There is no reason for optimism on any of these directions under current public policies. The emphasis on defense and the new focus on manned space stations will siphon off resources from much needed social programs already under attack. The $200 to $250 billion federal budget deficits annually in the next few years will put further pressures on social programs. These deficits were created by

overly generous tax benefits, mostly to high income groups, and by the costs involved in trying to be the world's policeman.

The solution involves putting more stress on negotiations with the Russians, backing off from stimulating another arms race, delaying expanded explorations of space and other postponable discretionary outlays until the budget is closer to being balanced, applying the same scrutiny to defense expenditures as is done for other programs, removing the non-needy from transfer programs designed for the poor, tightening up tax laws to reduce the number of "tax expenditures," increasing the gasoline tax and the minimum income tax on personal income, cutting part of the large decrease in the share of taxes paid under the corporate income tax, rescinding the forthcoming indexation of the personal income tax, and tightening agricultural subsidies.

The mix of fiscal and monetary policies should be reversed. The recent stimulative fiscal and restrictive monetary policy is causing the continuation of large scale and unequally shared unemployment, high real interest rates, an over-valued dollar, and huge foreign trade deficits. A much less stimulative fiscal policy and a more stimulative monetary policy are needed. This reversal of policy mix would lower real interest rates (causing higher housing, plant, and equipment expenditures), increase the number of jobs and productivity, reduce both the over-valued dollar and the trade deficit, and help balance the budget. If the balance of monetary and fiscal policy can be corrected, there will be no need to jeopardize the progress made in combating inflation and in beginning to wring inflationary expectations out of the nation's psychological state.

State

In Michigan, several policy initiatives are in process that will be helpful, if they are enacted into law with appropriate language. The Governor's job and economic development initiatives, including the Strategic Fund and the Minority Venture Capital program, are cases in point. Policy initiatives remaining to be addressed include providing adequate levels of assistance for the poor, developing programs for improving the quality of education and training for surviving in tomorrow's economy, devising a way to address meaningfully the bonding problems facing minority contractors, and increasing access to short-term capital at not more than a couple of points over the prime rate.

Some agency of the state should be exploring the alternatives for alleviating the attacks on the standard of living of the poor from several factors that are or will soon be having an impact. The sparse income of the poor will be eroded by substantial increases in phone bills due to the splitting of AT&T, in electricity bills due to cost factors and the higher amounts sought for completing nuclear plants, in gas bills because of higher energy costs and "take or pay" contracts gas companies have entered into, and in transportation costs as these persons try to find ways to overcome service deficiencies in public transportation systems.

Whatever the improvement in the economy, things could become tougher for the poor unless there are changes in public policy. Some changes are already under way in the state, but more has to be done if added hardships on a large scale are to be ameliorated or, better yet, avoided.

Local

Although all three levels of government are in fiscally tight circumstances, it is at the local level that the fiscal resources-needs gap is the largest. This is exacerbated by the lack of a national urban policy, by the transfer of functions from the federal government, and by the need for greater sensitivity by the state legislature.

The age groups most in need of public services generally are young people 18 years of age or below and adults over 65. These are the persons that central cities have in greater proportion than state averages (Table 14).

Table 14

Population, Percent Black Persons 18 or Below and Over 65 Years, Michigan, 1980, Index of Public Service Needs, Selected Cities

Jurisdiction	Total Population Number	Percent Black	Percent Below 18	Percent Above 65	Column 3 plus Column 4	Ratio of State Average
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(5)/39.5
The State	9,262.0	12.9	29.7	9.8	39.5	1.00
CITIES						
Ann Arbor	107.9	9.3	19.1	5.9	25.0[1]	.63[1]
Battle Creek[2]	35.7	22.8	28.8	14.0	42.8	1.08
Benton Harbor	14.7	86.3	44.7	7.8	52.5	1.33
Detroit[2]	1,203.3	63.1	30.3	11.7	42.0	1.06
Flint[2]	159.6	41.4	31.9	10.0	41.9	1.06
Grand Rapids[2]	181.8	15.7	27.4	13.4	40.8	1.03
Jackson	39.7	15.4	30.3	13.3	43.6	1.10
Kalamazoo	79.7	15.6	22.5	10.6	33.1	.84[1]
Lansing[2]	130.4	13.9	29.2	8.7	37.9[1]	.96[1]
Muskegon[2]	40.8	21.4	28.2	14.5	42.7	1.08
Muskegon Hgts	14.6	62.2	34.4	12.2	46.6	1.18
Pontiac[2]	76.5	37.2	33.6	9.1	42.7	1.08
Saginaw	77.5	35.6	32.5	11.2	43.7	1.11
Ypsilanti	24.0	29.4	19.8	7.6	27.4[1]	.69[1]

Source: Bureau of the Census, Summary Characteristics for Governmental Units and Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, Michigan, PHC 80-3-24, Table 1, 1982.

[1]These atypically low results are due to a disproportionately large proportion of college students in these jurisdictions.

[2]Cities with a local Urban League.

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Except for Ann Arbor, Kalamazoo, Lansing, and Ypsilanti, all of the cities with significant numbers of blacks residing in them also have disproportionately large numbers of persons 18 or below and over 65. Benton Harbor heads the list, with 33 percent above the state average in this respect. Detroit is six percent above the state average.

CONCLUSION

The importance of effective public and private policies is highlighted by the impact of several trends. Developing countries like Korea and Taiwan will continue to become more competitive. Increasingly, successful business operations and the generation of jobs in the private sector will require producing a quality product, keen strategic management and marketing skills, increased productivity, being on the forefront of technology, and controlling costs creatively. The skill levels for many new jobs will change with these trends and with the continued shift to automation and from manufacturing to the service industry. Just-in-time production and other changes in supplier relationships will make it more difficult for new firms to compete with the entrenched and more experienced firms. Computer illiteracy will be a handicap in a coming world of electronic banking and shopping at home, computer controlled home appliances, and omnipresent electronic word processing. The substantial growth in transfer payments in recent years will increase the resistance of the public to social programs that are not perceived as working well and worth the cost. This resistance will be exacerbated by the higher interest payments on the rapidly growing public debt. The complexity of problems will necessitate more

sophisticated analysis and understanding by public decision makers and the electorate for the selection of workable solutions.

Finally, the more disadvantaged a population, the more important are the services provided it by the public sector. The above circumstances do not bode well for low-income blacks and the poor. The years 1984 and 1985 will be tough ones for such groups. Enlightened public and private policies will be needed to carry the tide to central cities and their immediate environs. First, however, there must be a recognition nationally that the correct mix of macroeconomic policies, although essential, is not sufficient. Selective policies impacting on bypassed groups are also essential.

FOOTNOTES

1. Computed from Table 1 and data from the Bureau of the Census, State and Metropolitan Area Book, 1982, p. 91.

2. Computed from data in Table 3 and from the source of that table.

3. Computed from data in Table 3.

Chapter 3

UNEMPLOYMENT, EMPLOYMENT, AND TRAINING IN MICHIGAN

Richard W. Thomas

To be black and jobless in America has always been difficult, but to be black and jobless in Michigan at the present time is often a major tragedy. Michigan, long the heart of the industrial Midwest, the region sought out by countless black workers throughout the twentieth century, is rapidly being transformed by unprecedented historical and structural changes. A combination of forces, worldwide in scope, not the least of which is the relentless competition among international auto manufacturers, is forcing auto dependent regions such as Michigan and Ohio to adapt or die. Either way, unless something is done, the vital core of Michigan's black industrial working class will suffer irreparable setbacks in job losses and attendant ripple effects, such as loss of health insurance, increased emotional stress, family breakdowns, and loss of economic support for community institutions.

Observers of the current crisis could be less pessimistic if unemployment was merely frictional and seasonal, or even cyclical, but the type of unemployment presently devastating the Michigan black workforce is structural. Structural unemployment usually results from changes in the types of workers needed by the economy. New technology as well

as competition from foreign imports can render workers unemployable because of structural factors. The shifting of factories from inner city locations to suburbs also contributes to structural unemployment. While such forms of unemployment affect all classes of workers, "nonwhites are particularly hard hit...because they generally lack the financial ability to retrain for another career."[1]

Structural unemployment has had a critical impact on the blue-collar segments of the black working class and has also had a significant effect on the larger black community. For example, during the 1978 plant closings in the steel industry, black working class communities in the East and Midwest were affected more than white communities simply because black steel workers were more heavily concentrated in the industry. Thirty percent of the steel workers in Pittsburgh, Gary, and other industrial areas were black, and thus more vulnerable to structural unemployment.[2] Black workers in blue-collar occupations in Michigan were also especially vulnerable because of the state's dependence upon the auto industry. In 1975 nonwhite ("all persons not included in the white category")[3] workers in blue-collar occupations in Michigan experienced an unemployment rate of 25.8 percent compared to the white blue-collar rate of 16.6 percent. Nonwhites in white-collar occupations had an unemployment rate of 12 percent, compared to their white counterparts' unemployment rate of 6 percent. Thus, for both blue-collar and white-collar workers in Michigan in 1975, the unemployment rate was twice as high for nonwhites. In 1978 the nonwhite blue-collar unemployment rate declined to 11.9 percent but was still considerably

higher than the white rate of 6.9 percent. On the other hand, the nonwhite rate in white-collar occupations declined to 9.2 percent, compared to the white rate of 2.9 percent (see Table 1).

Table 1

Occupational Unemployment Rates By Race
State of Michigan: 1975 and 1978

	1975 Unemployment Rate		1978 Unemployment Rate	
Occupational Area	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite
Total, All Occupations	11.5%	21.0%	5.9%	14.4%
White-Collar	6.0	12.0	2.9	9.2
Professional & Technical	3.4	5.9	1.9	3.4
Managers & Officials	5.4	8.6	2.5	1.0
Sales Workers	5.5	34.0	3.8	31.2
Clerical Workers	8.5	12.9	3.6	10.1
Blue-Collar	16.6	25.8	6.9	11.9
Crafts Workers	10.7	16.5	4.3	8.0
Nontransport Operatives	20.8	29.9	7.8	12.3
Transport Operatives	12.1	12.1	7.1	11.4
Nonfarm Laborers	26.0	29.6	11.8	16.4
Service Workers	10.8	15.5	7.4	15.5
Farm Workers	1.8	--	4.0	--

Source: Minorities in Michigan's Work Force (Detroit: Michigan Employment Commission, May, 1980), p. 22.

Between 1975 and 1978, then, nonwhite workers in blue-collar occupations in Michigan bore the brunt of unemployment, and this continued

into the 1980s. The more concentrated black workers were in a particular industry, or in corporations such as Chrysler, within an industry, the more vulnerable the workers and their community were to structural changes affecting such industries and corporations. In August of 1979, close to 30 percent of Chrysler's national employment was made up of blacks and other minorites, and over half of its Detroit work force was nonwhite. During the Chrysler loan hearings, a Washington bureaucrat made the cynical remark that the loan guarantee "should have been named the Coleman Young bail-out bill and filed under one of the titles of the Civil Rights Acts."[4] Notwithstanding the obvious cynicism, the remark was not without its germ of truth. Chrysler and other auto companies and assorted parts suppliers have for decades provided the bulk of high wage employment for tens of thousands of black blue-collar workers. Most of these workers and the communities they supported could not have survived without the jobs provided by the auto industry. Black communities in Lansing, Flint, Detroit, Saginaw, and Pontiac, among others, still derive significant economic support from the industry. This historical dependency must be altered if black workers and their communities are to survive the radical transformations taking place in Michigan's economy.

Even if blacks break out of their historical dependency upon vulnerable blue-collar jobs in auto-related industries, they must be aware that some white-collar jobs, such as sales, are also vulnerable. In 1978, nonwhite unemployment in sales occupations in Michigan was 31.2 percent compared to the rate of 8 percent among nonwhite craft workers. In fact, nonwhite sales workers experienced the highest unemployment rate of all the major occupational categories (see Table 1). A key

strategy for economic survival for blacks and other minorities would be to spread throughout as many occupations as possible. In 1982, blacks in Michigan were still concentrated in manufacturing, 29.6 percent; service industries, 20.4; and government, 24.0. Whites were more spread out with 25.9 percent in manufacturing, 17.4 in service industries, and 14.7 in government. In addition, blacks made up only 10.4 percent of the trade category compared with 20 percent for whites.[5]

Occupational diversification among black workers has the effect of spreading out the impact of unemployment so that it is not so crippling to the larger community. Yet by any standard, black unemployment and underemployment are still major problems. Over the last decade, black unemployment in Michigan has steadily increased. In 1971 nonwhite males over 20 had an unemployment rate of 9 percent compared to the white rate of 5.1 percent. By 1975 the nonwhite male rate reached 19.7 percent, and the white rate moved up to 10.2 percent. From 1976 to 1978, nonwhite male unemployment averaged about 9.3 percent, with a low of 9.1 in 1978. Yet during the same period, the white male rate declined to 3.8 percent. The next three years were devastating for nonwhite males in the Michigan work force, as their unemployment rate went from 9.1 percent in 1978 to 14 in 1979, 24.9 in 1980, and 24.6 in 1981. While the white male rate also increased throughout this period, it did not exceed 11 percent. In 1981 the white male unemployment rate stood at 9.2 percent compared to the nonwhite male rate of 24.6 (see Table 2).

Table 2

Unemployment Rate by Race, Sex and Age
State of Michigan 1971-1981

Race, Sex, and Age	1971	1972	1973	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
White										
Men 20 years and over	5.2%	4.1%	3.0%	10.2%	6.6%	4.8%	3.8%	5.1%	10.9%	9.2%
Women 20 years and over	5.5	5.8	4.6	9.8	9.4	7.5	6.2	6.4	9.3	9.5
Black and other races										
Men 20 years and over	9.0	9.5	9.7	19.7	9.5	9.3	9.1	14.0	24.9	24.6
Women 20 years and over	15.1	11.4	12.6	16.3	15.8	15.9	14.1	15.3	17.9	22.7

Source: Michigan Statistical Abstract (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1981), p. 128.
(No data provided for 1974.)

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In the decade from 1971 to 1981, nonwhite male unemployment was much higher than that of white males, and nonwhite women also experienced high unemployment during this period. Unemployment for nonwhite women exceeded all groups and for most of the period was two or more times greater than the rate for white women. In 1971 nonwhite women had an unemployment rate of 15.1 percent compared with 5.5 percent for white women. By ten years later, the unemployment rate of nonwhite women had increased to 22.7 percent, while the rate for white women was 9.5 percent (see Table 2).

There can be no doubt that being white and male matters in Michigan as elsewhere, and race is still the key factor in the allocation of jobs. Although sexism is a real barrier for all women, it hinders nonwhite women much more than it does white women. Throughout this period (1971-81), white women experienced a much lower unemployment rate than nonwhite males. This suggests that race is the most critical factor in the allocation and retention of employment.

Since the term "nonwhite" includes other racial groups, the rate would have been much higher had it been just "black." The black and white comparative unemployment rates in eight selected cities in Michigan in 1980 provide a more accurate picture of black unemployment in the state (see Table 3).

Table 3

Unemployment Rates by Race for Persons 16 Years and Older Residing in 8 Michigan Cities, 1980

Ann Arbor		Flint	
White	5.9%	White	11.8%
Black	15.1	Black	23.1
Battle Creek		Grand Rapids	
White	9.0	White	5.9
Black	17.6	Black	18.0
Benton Harbor		Lansing	
White	8.5	White	7.3
Black	28.1	Black	13.8
Detroit		Muskegon	
White	9.5	White	10.4
Black	21.9	Black	19.6

Source: Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics (Washington, D.C., 1983), pp. 263-264.

In Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Detroit, Flint, Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Muskegon, black unemployment rates ranged from a high of 28.1 percent in Benton Harbor to a low of 13.8 in Lansing. Both Detroit and Flint had unemployment rates in the 20 percent range, with 21.9 and 23.1 respectively. The white unemployment rate was highest in Flint at 11.8 percent and lowest in Grand Rapids and Ann Arbor at 5.9 percent in both cities.

Black unemployment in 1980 was particularly high in cities where blacks were concentrated in blue-collar jobs. As mentioned before, concentration in blue-collar jobs increases chances of unemployment. The eight selected cities ranked as follows in order of highest concentration of blacks in blue-collar jobs (see Table 4).

Flint	52.6%	Battle Creek	36.8
Muskegon	47.6	Detroit	35.4
Grand Rapids	45.1	Lansing	31.3
Benton Harbor	39	Ann Arbor	27.7

TABLE 4

PERCENT OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION BY RACE FOR MAJOR MICHIGAN CITIES, 1980

OCCUPATIONS	Ann Arbor		Battle Creek		Benton Harbor		Detroit		Flint		Grand Rapids		Lansing		Muskegon	
	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White
Managerial and Professional Specialty Occupations	22.2	32.7	12.1	18.9	14.6	21.3	15.2	23.5	11.4	18.2	13.9	20.9	19.3	23.3	10.9	18.5
Technical, Sales, and Administrative Support Occupations	27.5	30.5	23.9	27.6	19.5	27.3	28.6	31.6	17.9	26.5	20.4	30.0	31.3	32.4	20.2	27.6
Service	21.8	12.8	25.9	13.9	25.1	11.9	20.2	12.4	17.6	12.3	20.1	12.4	17.4	13.9	22.9	13.9
Farm, Forestry, and Fishing Occupations	-	1.3	0.8	2.4	1.6	3.3	0.3	0.6	0.2	1.0	0.3	1.7	0.3	2.3	0.5	2.0
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair Occupations	5.9	9.2	7.1	13.6	6.8	14.1	8.1	13.8	9.7	15.7	8.9	13.6	7.0	11.0	9.0	14.1
Operations, Fabrications, and Laborers	21.8	13.3	29.8	23.3	32.2	21.9	27.3	17.8	42.9	25.9	36.2	21.1	24.3	17.0	38.6	23.7

Calculated From Source: Census of Population. Michigan General Social and Economic Characteristics (Washington, D.C., 1983), p. 312.

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It is likely that these cities will suffer more extreme bouts of unemployment and underemployment if attempts are not made to increase the occupational distribution. Cities with the largest percent of blacks in one white-collar category, "managerial and professional specialty occupations,"[6] were led by Ann Arbor and Lansing which in 1980 also had the two lowest black unemployment rates in the state.

The managerial and professional specialty category included such professions as legislators, general administrators, architects, engineers, physicians, dentists, and teachers. The eight selected cities ranked as follows in this category:

Ann Arbor	22.2
Lansing	19.3
Detroit	15.3
Benton Harbor	14.6
Grand Rapids	13.9
Battle Creek	12.1
Flint	11.4
Muskegon	10.9 (see Table 4)

In the technical, sales,and administrative occupations, which include dental hygienists, licensed practical nurses, radiologic technicians, computer programmers, legal assistants, real estate sales people, cashiers, and secretaries,* the cities ranked:

Lansing	31.3
Detroit	28.6
Ann Arbor	27.5
Battle Creek	23.9
Grand Rapids	20.4
Muskegon	20.2
Benton Harbor	19.5
Flint	17.9 (see Table 4)

Here again, blacks in Lansing, Detroit, and Ann Arbor led in this occupational category. It should be kept in mind, however, that this occupational category contains low-income jobs such as news vendors,

*occupational categories as cited in fn. 6

cashiers, and sales counter clerks. The service occupational category includes private household workers, police and fire-fighters, food service workers, and cleaning and building service occupations. Private household work, food service, and cleaning are traditionally low-wage jobs with little future. Police and fire-fighting jobs are decent paying; but because of the economic crisis, forcing layoffs in protective service occupations, blacks in these jobs are just as vulnerable as those in some blue-collar occupations. The cities ranked as follows for percent of blacks in this occupational category in 1980 (see Table 4):

Battle Creek	25.9	Detroit	20.2
Benton Harbor	25.1	Grand Rapids	20.2
Muskegon	22.9	Lansing	20.1
Ann Arbor	21.8	Flint	17.6

The majority of black workers in service occupations in the three top cities were concentrated in the food service, building, and cleaning occupations.[7] Considering the fact that blacks in these three cities were also concentrated in the lowest blue-collar occupations, such as operators, fabricators, and laborers, they are that much more vulnerable to economic changes. The category of precision production, craft, and repair occupations contains a significant number of highly skilled workers, some of whom, with retraining, will be able to move into the emerging high tech fields. The eight cities rank as follows, based on percent of blacks in this category (see Table 4):

Flint	9.7	Battle Creek	7.1
Muskegon	9.0	Lansing	7.0
Grand Rapids	8.9	Benton Harbor	6.8
Detroit	8.1	Ann Arbor	5.9

Excluding farm, forestry, and fishing occupations, blacks in all eight cities had the lowest percent of their total work force in the precision production, craft, and repair occupations. The same was true for whites in only four cities: Battle Creek, Detroit, Flint, and Grand Rapids. Although blacks in Ann Arbor had the lowest percent in this occupational group, they were more evenly distributed throughout the major occupational categories. In addition, blacks in Ann Arbor were more highly represented in the white-collar occupational categories in contrast to blacks in Benton Harbor, for example, who were more concentrated in lower-level blue-collar jobs (see Table 4).

Using disparity between blacks and whites in 5 of the 6 major occupational categories as a measure of ranking blacks in the 8 cities, with the largest disparity ranked highest, we find the following:

Managerial and Professional Specialty Occupations

Ann Arbor
Detroit
Flint - Grand Rapids - Muskegon
Benton Harbor - Battle Creek
Lansing

Technical, Sales, and Administrative Support Occupations

Grand Rapids
Muskegon - Flint
Benton Harbor
Ann Arbor - Battle Creek
Lansing
Detroit

Service Occupations

Benton Harbor
Battle Creek
Muskegon
Ann Arbor
Detroit - Grand Rapids
Flint
Lansing

Precision Production, Craft, and Repair Occupations

Battle Creek
Detroit - Flint
Benton Harbor
Grand Rapids - Muskegon
Ann Arbor
Lansing

Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers

Flint
Grand Rapids
Muskegon
Benton Harbor
Detroit
Ann Arbor
Lansing
Battle Creek (see Table 4)

These rankings reveal several pertinent facts about the black/white occupational differences in the 8 cities. While blacks in Ann Arbor had a higher percent of their total work force in the managerial and professional specialty (MPS) occupations than blacks in the other cities, the occupational disparity between blacks and whites in this MPS was greater in Ann Arbor than in the remaining cities. Blacks in Lansing, on the other hand, had the second largest percentage of blacks in the MPS occupations but much less occupational disparity between blacks and whites. Lansing also had a smaller occupational gap between blacks and whites in 4 out of the 5 occupational categories than blacks in all the cities except Detroit and Battle Creek. Blacks in Detroit and Battle Creek had greater parity with whites in technical, sales, and administrative support (TSAS), and operators, fabricators, and laborers (OFL) occupations. In TSAS occupations, blacks in Grand Rapids, Muskegon, and Flint were farther behind whites than blacks in Benton Harbor, Ann Arbor, and Battle Creek. These rankings reveal the extent of the occupational

disparities for blacks and whites in the 8 selected cities. Based on the data from these cities, it appears that blacks in Michigan remain concentrated in the lowest paying jobs as well as in those with little future. In jobs with high pay and a future, there still remains significant disparity between blacks and whites.

Complicating these problems is the much greater problem of black youth unemployment, which in Michigan has reached an all-time high. In 1980, the unemployment rate for black youths (16-19-year olds) was 46.2 percent compared to the white youth rate of 18.5 percent. In 1981, 63.6 percent of all black youths in Michigan were without jobs while the white youth unemployment rate increased to 22.3 percent.[8] During the third quarter of 1983, black youth unemployment reached the frightening level of 73 percent. In sharp contrast, the white youth jobless rate was down to 18.1 percent.[9]

Without question, black youth unemployment is a problem of disaster proportions. At a time when many black communities in Michigan are experiencing unprecedented adult black unemployment rates, and long-fought-for gains in municipal jobs are in danger of being lost,[10] close to two-thirds of the black youth, the next generation, are without gainful employment. If the black community ever faced a serious crisis in its long history in the state, most certainly it is eyeball to eyeball with one now. What shall we do and what are the options for economic survival?

Some black leaders see high tech as one way out of the crisis, and for some blacks--a small minority--this is true. But the problem is bigger than the placing of a small group of blacks in high tech jobs. We cannot count upon high tech to turn the present tide of unemployment

by generating a sufficient number of jobs at the educational levels where most blacks and other minorities are located. Growth industries like high tech require highly trained workers, not poorly educated young people and unemployed production-line automobile workers. Efforts are being made, nowever, to retrain displaced auto workers for emerging high tech jobs in the automobile industry as well as to protect auto workers from what UAW president Owen Bieber called "wholesale sacrifice on the altar of technological change."[11] Black workers in particular have to be concerned about the possibility of such a "sacrifice" because they have such a large percent of their total work force in the auto industry. Minority workers make up 22.4 percent of all workers in the automobile industry nation-wide.[12] The implications of this fact are chilling, since it has been estimated that the present crop of robots "has the technical capability to perform nearly 7 million existing factory jobs...and that some time after 1990, it will become technically possible to replace all manufacturing operations in the automotive, electrical-equipment, machinery, and fabricated-metals industries.[13]

It would be tragic if a few qualified blacks in high tech industries would produce robots that would displace hundreds of black auto workers. Yet qualified blacks must pursue high tech jobs, and unqualified blacks will have to be either trained or retrained. There are a few hopeful signs that high tech might be able to contribute to the reduction of black unemployment. Calvin L. Stevens, vice president of research and acting provost at Wayne State University in Detroit, has suggested that WSU "... can upgrade jobs and help the unemployed to enter the high technology economy. Our medical center provides a unique resource to spawn a high

technology medical industry." In addition, the university and Mayor Young have already established a local High Technology Task Force[14] which will have an impact on black unemployment. Mayor Young might be a key black leader to pave the way for all levels of Michigan blacks to enter high tech industries--especially if they locate in the Detroit area and center in the automobile and medical industries.

Also important is the new comprehensive retraining and training program started by the UAW and General Motors in September of 1983. Set up to serve some 9,300 laid-off UAW-GM workers, it "includes a Regional Employee Skills Development and Training Center that will assess the availability of jobs, train workers and assist them in securing jobs within the GM system and in other industries." Training and retraining will include "employee-specific training-demand occupations such as computer systems operations, statistical process control, electronics, building maintenance, word processing, machinists, medical technology and so on."[15] Workers needing basic reading, mathematics, and communication skills will also be served. But the key point is that some workers will obtain training suitable for high tech employment, and many of these workers will be black. With the UAW/GM program and the High Tech Task Force in Detroit, blacks in Michigan might be able to get at least a foothold in the high tech industry in Michigan.

Much more work will have to be done, however, to aid unemployed blacks beyond the reach of these small efforts. For those blacks who will not be able to obtain jobs in high tech industries because of inadequate educational backgrounds, there are other job options. While employment in jobs requiring college degrees or certain types of post-secondary

technical training will undergo tremendous expansion, other types of jobs requiring little or no post-secondary training will also expand significantly. Notwithstanding the technological changes sweeping through the regional and national economies, there will be a growing demand, between 1982 and 1995, for more truck drivers and for people to clean buildings, deliver health services, provide police and fire protection, and repair and maintain an expanding stock of cars, appliances, and factory equipment.[16] Health-related occupations are also expected to expand. Some people might not prefer to work as nurse's aides and orderlies in large hospital complexes, but these jobs represent faster than average growth.[17] Although such jobs might not be as glamorous as computer programming, they can be stepping stones to better paying jobs in the future.

It is critical that black leaders and community groups concerned about the future of black employment come to grips with the demands of the present economic crisis. What is needed now is innovative thinking and planning of a nature and on a scale never before attempted. Short and long range planning for black employment and for training and retraining, based upon projected job growth for the next decade or more, is essential for black economic survival in Michigan and elsewhere (see Tables 5 and 6).

TABLE 5 - 20 Occupations Expected to be Fastest-Growing
United States, 1982-95

Occupation	Percent growth in employment
Computer service technicians	96.8
Legal assistants	94.3
Computer systems analysts	85.3
Computer programmers	76.9
Computer operators	75.8
Office machine repairers	71.7
Physical therapy assistants	67.8
Electrical engineers	65.3
Civil engineering technicians	63.9
Peripheral EDP equipment operators	63.5
Insurance clerks, medical	62.2
Electrical and electronic technicians	60.7
Occupational therapists	59.8
Surveyor helpers	58.6
Credit clerks, banking and insurance	54.1
Physical therapists	53.6
Employment interviews	52.5
Mechanical engineers	52.1
Mechanical engineering technicians	51.6
Compression and injection mold machine operators, plastics	50.3

20 Occupations Expected to Decline Most
Rapidly, United States, 1982-95

Occupation	Percent decline in employment
Railroad conductors	32.0
Shoemaking machine operatives	30.2
Aircraft structure assemblers	21.0
Central telephone office operators	20.0
Taxi drivers	18.9
Postal clerks	17.9
Private household workers	16.9
Farm laborers	15.9
College and university faculty	15.0
Roustabouts	14.4
Postmasters and mail superintendents	13.8
Rotary drill operator helpers	11.6
Graduate assistants	11.2
Data entry operators	10.6
Railroad brake operators	9.8
Fallers and buckers	8.7
Stenographers	7.4
Farm owners and tenants	7.3
Typesetters and compositors	7.3
Butchers and meatcutters	6.3

Source: Monthly Labor Review (November 1983) p. 46.

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TABLE 6 - Fastest Growing Occupations 1980 to 1990, Michigan

	1980 Employment	1990 Employment	Growth Rate	Annual Total	Average Growth	Openings Replacement
Paralegal Personnel	600	1,450	149.5%	140	90	50
Data Processing Machine Mechanics	350	750	101.6	40	40	0
Computer Systems Analysts	7,100	12,800	80.2	650	570	90
Computer Operators	5,450	8,900	63.4	450	350	100
Food Preparation & Service Workers, Fast Food	31,500	49,000	55.7	3,270	1,750	1,520
Office Machine & Cash Register Servicers	1,350	2,100	55.0	100	70	20
Law Clerks	950	1,400	50.9	110	50	60
Computer Programmers	7,200	10,800	49.7	440	360	90
Dental Hygienists	3,200	4,750	49.3	300	165	150
Dental Assistants	6,800	10,150	48.7	640	330	310
Sale Agents & Representatives, Securities	1,800	2,550	44.3	190	80	110
Dental Lab Technicians	1,850	2,650	43.5	140	80	[illegible]
Lawyers	12,100	17,350	43.5	1,260	530	[illegible]
Electrical Engineers	6,400	9,050	41.0	390	260	130
Opticians, Lens Grinders & Polishers	1,950	2,750	39.9	130	80	50
Peripheral EDP Equipment Operators	1,150	1,600	39.1	60	40	20
Dispensing Opticians	1,850	2,550	39.0	120	70	50
Physical Therapy Technicians	550	800	39.0	50	20	20
Hosts/Hostesses, Restaurants & Lounges	5,050	7,000	38.2	390	190	190
Physical Therapists	900	1,200	34.7	60	30	30
Claim Adjusters	2,100	2,800	34.4	120	70	50
Occupational Therapists	900	1,200	33.8	60	30	30
Waiters Assistants	10,750	14,300	33.5	470	360	120
Sewers and Stitchers	9,350	12,400	32.6	730	310	420
Speech & Hearing Clinicians	1,600	2,150	32.4	110	50	60
Farm Managers	1,250	1,650	32.2	90	40	50
Pantry, Sandwich and/or Coffee Makers	2,150	2,800	31.7	160	70	90
Dentists	5,300	7,000	31.7	270	170	100
Veterinarians	800	1,050	31.3	40	30	20
Tax Preparers	850	1,100	30.5	50	30	50
Nurses	46,750	60,800	30.0	3,310	1,400	1,910
Nurse Aides/Orderlies	53,400	69,400	30.0	3,680	1,600	2,080
Hotel & Motel Housekeepers	4,400	5,750	29.8	350	130	220
Medical Lab Assistants	3,700	4,800	29.6	220	110	110
Restaurant Cooks	11,950	15,350	28.4	830	340	490
Fitters, Pipelaying	1,400	1,750	27.5	80	40	40
Chiropractors	850	1,100	27.2	80	20	50
Medical Assistants	6,250	7,950	27.2	410	170	240
Ceiling Tile Installers, Floor Layers	700	900	27.2	30	20	10
Guards	30,600	38,850	27.1	3,010	830	2,180
Household Appliance Installers	450	550	27.0	20	10	10
Optometrists	900	1,150	26.9	80	20	60

Source: Labor Market Division MESC Detroit

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Black youths, displaced workers, and poor black female heads of households should be top priority concerns for all black leaders and community groups. Assumptions about the role of education should be carefully reexamined. What kinds of education and/or problem-specific training or retraining do various segments of the black population need to survive and progress in a changing economy for the next decade or so? Black unemployment is not new, and the high tech revolution is not the first time that blacks have been caught unprepared. Neither is it the first time that black leaders and community groups have failed to anticipate employment crises and to propose viable solutions. But the present crisis might be the last time that black leaders and community groups will have an opportunity to take steps to try to save a generation of black workers from becoming permanently unemployable.

FOOTNOTES

1. Minorities in Michigan's Work Force (Detroit: Michigan Employment Security Commission, May, 1980), p. 23.

2. Bernard E. Anderson, "The Economy," in The State of Black America, 1978 (Washington, D.C.: National Urban League, Inc., 1978), p. 8.

3. See Minorities in Michigan's Work Force, p. 81

4. Barry Bluestone and Bennett Harrison, The Deindustrialization of America (New York: Basic Books, 1982), p. 54.

5. Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment, 1982 (Washington, D.C. BLS, N.S. Department of Labor, May, 1983), pp. 69-70.

6. Census of Population. General Social and Economic Characteristics (Washington, D.C., 1983), p. 312; Appendix B, pp. 14-16.

7. Ibid, pp. 312-313.

8. Figures quoted in Youth Employment, Marshaling Our Resources (Lansing: Youth Clearinghouse, Bureau of Employment and Training, Michigan Department of Labor, January 1983), p. 4.

9. Employment Status of Civilian Population by Age, Race and Sex. Labor Market Division MESC, Detroit, Michigan, 1984.

10. Affirmative Action in Michigan Cities (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1982), p. 1; Michigan Chronicle, September 10, 1983.

11. Detroit Free Press, December 15, 1983.

12. Statement of Sheldan Friedman, Research Director, UAW, before the House Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities and the Senate Subcommittee on Employment and Productivity on Employment and Training Policy, March 17, 1982, p. 2.

13. Sam A. Levitam and Cliford M. Johnson, "The Future of Work: Does it Belong to Us or to the Robots?" Monthly Labor Review, September 1982, p. 11.

14. "Michigan...Technology that Works," Scientific American, September 1982, p. M4.

15. News from the UAW, September 15, 1983.

16. George T. Silvestri, John M. Lukasievicz, and Marcus E. Einstein, "Occupational Employment Projections Through 1995," Monthly Labor Review, November 1983, p. 37.

17. Ibid, p. 46.

Chapter 4

BLACK POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN MICHIGAN: CHALLENGES FOR THE EIGHTIES

Wilbur C. Rich

The seventies will not be remembered as one of the nation's most exciting or progressive decades. Marked by recession, social stagnation, and energy crises, it was a particularly difficult decade for black Americans. The civil rights momentum of the sixties was lost. Politically, blacks saw a Southerner become President with their enthusiastic support. For black Michiganians, the seventies was a decade of triumphs and disillusionments. The 1974 election of Coleman Young as Mayor of Detroit was clearly the high point of the decade. The censure and retirement of Charles Diggs, dean of the black Congressional delegation, and the disappointments of the Carter Administration were certainly low points of the decade. These events occurred in a rapidly changing national political environment. The new and emerging national politicians promoted Sunbelt states, neo-conservatism, and Social Darwinism.' As a result, blacks in Michigan and elsewhere began to rediscover the political efficacy of bloc voting. The problem was that the national Democratic party renominated Jimmy Carter, and he lost the Presidency.

The seventies must be credited with teaching the black community

an important political lesson. Electoral participation proved to be an effective weapon in the struggle. The vote, long available to blacks in Michigan, was recognized as the primary vehicle for social and political mobility. Unfortunately, the lesson was learned unevenly within the black community. There are still unregistered black adults in Michigan. Those unregistered blacks could have made the Michigan Reagan-Carter contest much closer. Their counterparts in some Southern states could have made the difference.

The 1980 election of Ronald Reagan marked a profound change in American politics. Mr. Reagan swept the nation with a Western brand of conservatism. His victory also included Michigan, a pro-labor and liberal state. Ronald Reagan asserted an anti-government policy in the campaign, and he has attempted to implement it in the first three years of his administration. There were huge tax cuts, reductions in welfare spending, and increases in defense spending. These policies came during a national recession and had crippling effects on Michigan. Blacks in Michigan and the nation have assumed a disproportional ratio of the unemployment. During these first three years of the Reagan Administration, civil rights law enforcement lost much of its immediacy. Although President Reagan denies it, many blacks consider him insensitive to the plight of blacks in America.

The negative perception of the Reagan Administration, rising unemployment, and layoffs in the auto industry all played a major role in shaping the attitudes of black Michiganians in the 1982 election. The retirement of William Milliken, a very popular moderate Republican,

provided the Democratic party with an opportunity to recapture the State House for the first time in over a decade. The election revealed voter uncertainty; scars of the recession had cut deep in the psyches of most Michiganians. Despite the nomination of Republican conservative Richard Headlee, the Democratic nominee James Blanchard failed to rekindle the fire of coalition politics. He won with only 51 percent of the vote. Barone and Ujifusa, in The Almanac of American Politics, provided the following explanation for this narrow victory.

> Voters seemed to have been shaken out of their old voting habits, and were willing to listen to almost any kind of proposal. The politics of the middle--of following the lead of enlightened big business and big labor--seemed to have failed, and no one is at all sure yet what will be the political response to the third turning point in Michigan's history.[1]

The Almanac writers concluded that "Michigan has a politics of turmoil. Voters have been knocked loose from their moorings and have not necessarily rallied around the old flag."[2]

If the general voting population was "knocked loose from their moorings," blacks were returning home to the Democratic party. They no longer had a choice between a moderate Republican and a weak Democratic candidate. For blacks, there were few cross-pressures attached to the Headlee campaign. The union leaders and blacks promoted Mr. Blanchard as a dynamic progressive. Blacks were told that Blanchard was the key to Congressional support of the Chrysler Corporation loan, and that the old Democratic coalition could be rebuilt in Lansing. Most, if not all, black politicians endorsed Mr. Blanchard. The black voters also endorsed him, and he was elected. Black votes were crucial to Blanchard's

victory because Headlee began to gain momentum near the end of the campaign. Voting as a bloc, blacks were able to offset strong Headlee support outside Detroit. Although the black bloc vote was not strong enough to prevent Reagan from carrying the state in 1980, it combined with growing anti-Republican sentiment to stop Headlee in 1982. The new Democratic coalition formed in 1980 was consolidated in 1982. To understand the cohesiveness of black voters in 1982, one must review the changing demographic conditions.

THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF MICHIGAN BLACKS

Probably the most striking aspect of Michigan politics is the changing demographic profile of its black population. Since 1970, the black population has undergone significant social transformations. Over the years, the state black population has changed from 9.4 percent in 1960 to 11.2 percent in 1970, to 12.9 percent in 1980.

A progressive slowdown in black migration to Michigan occurred between 1970 and 1980. Michigan, with its cornucopia of semi-skilled jobs in the manufacturing industry, has traditionally drawn many blacks from the South. With the decline of auto industry jobs and population shifts to the Sunbelt cities, Michigan no longer attracts large numbers of out-of-state job seekers. It is axiomatic in demography that rapid population growth is the result of migration, not high birth rates. For this reason the 1970-1980 population figures of selected Michigan cities are significant (see Table 1).

Table 1

Blacks as Percentage of the Total Population in Selected Michigan Cities, 1970 and 1980

Selected Cities	1970 Population	Percent Black	1980 Population	Percent Black
Detroit	1,511,482	43.6%	1,203,339	63.1%
Pontiac	85,279	26.6	76,715	37.2
Lansing	131,546	9.3	103,414	13.9
Muskegon	44,631	14.3	40,823	21.4
Flint	193,317	28.1	159,611	41.4
Grand Rapids	197,649	11.2	181,843	15.7
Battle Creek	38,931	20.0	35,724	22.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

These figures show substantial increases in the percentage of black population in all of the selected cities, while these cities were simultaneously experiencing decreases in total population. Aside from being evidence of white flight, the data show the general dispersal of the state population from central cities. The increased percentages of blacks in Detroit, Pontiac, and Flint have important political implications. These cities have black mayors and have strong supportive black political organizations.

Of the state's black population of 1,199,023 in 1980 (i.e., 12.9 percent of Michigan population) most were living in large and medium

size cities. Of the seven cities selected for this paper, Detroit experienced the highest decline in population (-20.5 percent). This decline was mainly white, as the black population increased from 660,428 to 758,939. Population declines were also reported for Flint (-17.4 percent), Grand Rapids (-8.0 percent), Pontiac (-10.0 percent), Battle Creek (-8.2 percent), Lansing (-10.4 percent), and Muskegon (-8.5 percent). White flight has enabled blacks to consolidate political power in these cities. At the same time, white flight has greatly diminished the central city's tax base and the opportunities for coalition politics. The situation has spurred more political participation and more demands for political benefits, as more blacks won elections in these cities.

VARIETIES OF MICHIGAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENTS

An analysis of the various ways in which residents of the seven selected cities have adapted to their political environments can be instructive in a review of black political participation in Michigan. Blacks growing up in the western Michigan cities of Battle Creek, Muskegon, and Grand Rapids will have different political attitudes than their counterparts in Flint, Pontiac, or Detroit. The latter cities have black mayors and city councilmembers. They have also developed strong black political organizations. How blacks perceive Michigan politics depends on their political setting. If a black citizen observes a black mayor making decisions and controlling the political agenda, chances are this experience will promote a sense of political efficacy. Hence, it is significant when blacks in Muskegon experience

victory in the city commissioner race, even though the margin is only two votes. The election of a black commissioner and the narrow defeat of a black candidate for county commissioner increase interest in politics. These events add to the success blacks enjoy in Muskegon Heights politics. Each success makes it easier for the local ad hoc coalition to register black voters. Black leaders will begin to aspire to the elective offices in districts where they find they can be competitive with white candidates.

In Grand Rapids, a Republican stronghold and prototype conservative Midwest community, blacks have a much more difficult challenge to mobilization. They do not have the population to elect a city commissioner or mayor. Voter registration in Grand Rapids is also hampered by a rule that restricts the areas where an individual can be registered. Workers in the local ad hoc registration drive cannot attend public events to sign up voters. Although the local Urban League and other groups have attempted to change this rule, they have thus far been unsuccessful. The present political environment of Grand Rapids is consistent with the thesis that hostile political settings discourage enthusiastic black political participation. In the absence of a high level of black participation, the community is less able to shield its role models from pressures from the white community. The white media or politicians can attack black leaders with impunity. Presently, no avenue of effective response is available.

One of the first Michigan cities to have a black mayor was Battle Creek. This western Michigan community has always enjoyed a

relatively positive political environment. Today, the current issue before the black community is the impact of the consolidation of Battle Creek and Battle Creek Township. This occurred in 1982 and resulted in black losses in the total percentage of the population. In the 1980 census, blacks had approximately 23 percent of the population. With consolidation, that figure has been reduced by 2-3 percent. These population losses represent a threat to the current two black council seats. Accordingly, blacks organized the Battle Creek Committee for the Future, a group of black organizations and individuals, for the purpose of supporting a modified ward system that would assure black representation in city government. Battle Creek is a good example of coalition politics, and there is every reason to believe that the campaign to retain black representation will be successful.

A university community such as Greater Lansing has a different problem. Despite a sizable middle class black community, there are currently no blacks on the city council. This is partly due to divisions within the leadership of the black community. Although the Republican party has remained active in the city and has recruited black voters, party competition has not generated more black participation. Another contributing factor is town-gown divisions which plague many university communities. Although the Black Advisory Council has been successful in getting blacks appointed to volunteer boards, there seems to be no unifying theme in the community which could mobilize a strong black vote. Although the black leadership has been able to work behind the scenes, they have not been able to create the kinds of coalitions that result in electoral victories.

In Flint, a highly industrialized southeastern Michigan city, the political environment is complicated by persistent unemployment. Blacks have shouldered a disproportionate amount of the unemployment burden. While the city's economic future is uncertain, the political future is encouraging. In 1983, the city elected James Sharp its first black Mayor. This is also a city of coalition politics, and a coalition called the VOTE Community--Voice of The Ethnic Community--was instrumental in mobilizing the vote in the 1982 election.

Detroit, the largest center of Michigan black population, remains the pacesetter for black politics in Michigan. Its mayor, Coleman Young, seems to have a firm grip on the city's politics, and has gained a national reputation as a black leader. As a product of the labor movement, Mayor Young understands and practices coalition politics. His personal relationships with national political and business leaders have enhanced his political power. Generally, blacks have responded well to his ten years' tenure. They supported his 1981 Fiscal Rescue Package even though it contained a tax increase. However, there are nagging problems in the city. Crime, poor schools, and abandoned housing continue to erode the city's resources and reputation. The recession of the seventies and the loss of personal relationships to the White House have hurt the city. Detroit can no longer rely on the largess of the federal government, nor can it depend upon its special relationship with the governor.[1] As a result, the city is undergoing subtle political changes which may or may not be appropriate reactions to the turmoil of Michigan politics.

BLACK POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Traditional approaches to black political participation have focused on voter registration, voter turnout, and nonvoting. We add to these approaches by examining the context of participation. The study of the use of the vote by blacks can be called generic electoral politics. An alternative to this form of participation is reactive protest politics. Each has its role, but the latter is only episodically available to blacks. Economic and social conditions have to be just right to maximize the utility of this form of participation. Hence, the electoral form is more predictable and reliable as a means of interest articulation and aggregation. Political scientist William Keech observed:

> The vote merits attention because it is the most widely distributed of all political resources, because all decisions in a democratic form of government rest ultimately on votes, and because it is perhaps the major mechanism for translating popular preferences into governmental decisions. Various groups, from the propertyless to women, have sought the vote on the grounds that it is an important resource in the implementation of their preferences and the recognition of their interests, as well as their worth as persons.[3]

Accordingly, it is incumbent upon political leaders and activists to monitor the changing political demography. The increases in the percentage of black population (as shown in Table 1) have significant implications for black political mobilization.

As the black population percentage increases, it also increases the possibility of electing black officials and of creating opportunities for stronger coalitions with whites. These population percentage increases are meaningless, however, unless blacks are registered to vote.

In the 1980 election, 72.1 percent of eligible blacks were registered to vote, with 53.7 percent reported voting. Compared to 73.1 percent of eligible whites registered and 54.5 percent reported voting, the black population did quite well; but they alone could not prevent a Reagan victory in Michigan or elect a governor. In order to have that kind of impact, they must have a higher rate of registration and voting. For example, in 1982 in Illinois, blacks constituted 12.3 percent of the population, of which 76.1 percent were registered to vote. This was higher than the percentage for whites (69.7 percent). Registered blacks also voted at a higher percentage than registered whites (64 percent compared to 54.2 percent).[4]

The situation may be improving as the overall rate of registered Michiganians has increased. By 1984, the Secretary of State's office reported that Michigan was fifth in the nation, with over 80 percent of the eligible Michigan population registered.[5]

Despite the admirable Michigan record of registering blacks, they are less active in electoral politics than their white counterparts. Political participation is a function of attitudes, personal factors, stimuli, and environment.[6] Research has shown that middle class and college-educated individuals receive more stimuli from the political environment. In a classic study entitled The American Voter, Angus Campbell and associates found that the more intense the partisan preferences, the more likely an individual is to vote and participate in the electoral process.[7] These involved voters are also more likely to contribute money to political campaigns. Conversely, a less-educated and lower class individual receives less stimuli and is less likely to

vote. People in this category have been characterized as apathetic and alienated.[8] Hence, there are several factors which contribute to a decision to vote or not to vote. The lack of political participation among blacks has generated several theories.

NON-PARTICIPATION AMONG BLACKS

The so-called "indirect effect theory" argues that the lack of black political participation can be explained by non-racial factors. Since blacks are more likely to be found in the lower socio-economic strata of society, they are less likely to be involved politically. Accordingly, class position, not ethnic group membership, explains political behavior. Lower-class individuals vote less and have fewer strong political views. In this respect, blacks in lower socio-economic strata behave similarly to their white counterparts. These strata have been called apolitical,[9] apathetic,[10] and alienated.[11]

A competing explanation is the isolation theory. It asserts that, aside from structural barriers to voting (factors related to racial discrimination), blacks are essentially isolated from the mainstream of political life. Professor A.M. Orum argued that blacks are more alienated than whites because of existing social and economic barriers.[12]

Sociologist Marvin Olsen and political scientist Richard Shingles have argued that social and political barriers have produced an intense sense of activism and political efficacy among blacks.[13, 14] Strong political attitudes are more prevalent than among whites. Blacks tend to regard voting as a tool for social justice and mobility. Yet many

can be mobilized to cast a vote only when they perceive a clear and present danger to the group.[15]

Professor Nicholas Dangelis' political climate theory has combined the theories of indirect effect, isolation, and black consciousness. He argues that environment is the independent variable. In different areas and time periods in the country's history, the political climates have facilitated or hindered black political participation. As a consequence, "Blacks have faced differing levels of political discrimination historically."[16] When the climate has been supportive, blacks have fully participated. In areas where black participation was not tolerated, blacks have a low participation rate, suggesting that political climate explains the differences in white/black political participation. He reviews national political opinion data from 1952-1972 to support his thesis. These data show low black voting patterns in areas where this behavior was suppressed by intolerance. In the South, this suppression did not preclude non-voting modes of participation (donating money and talking about politics).

Dangelis' notion of a political climate also applies to Midwestern cities. Blacks have always enjoyed an active and visible part in Detroit politics, while they have played a lesser role in western areas of the state. Michigan has always tolerated black participation, so the underparticipation of blacks seems to be related to indirect effects and social isolation. Although Michigan has a strong blue-collar middle-class black population, it has yet to develop a large white-collar black middle class composed of persons not employed in the public sector. Most white-collar middle-class blacks are public school teachers and

government employees. Politically, they are very unionized and dependent on favorable state politics. They tend to vote for candidates who advocate expansion of the public sector and increased government spending.

A more independent and private sector black middle-class group would presumably not be so attached to the roller coaster of state and local politics. Accordingly, these voters would have more candidate choices and a less predictable voting pattern. The less predictable the voters are, the more the candidates must do to win votes. For example, the black middle class votes similarly to the black working class. Hence there is no incentive to shape a political campaign to differentiate between the two.

In a paper entitled "Toward a Theory of Black Voting," I have argued that the predictability of black voting has taken the mystery out of campaigning.[17] White candidates know that blacks will vote Democratic. The task for the conservative white candidate is to offset the black bloc. The white liberal task is simply to increase black turnout.

Herein lies the dilemma for blacks. If the Republicans choose not to compete for black votes, as was the case in the Headlee campaign, then blacks are locked into the Democratic candidates. In "Toward a Theory...," I argued that abstaining from voting means risking the election of white officials who may be hostile or indifferent to blacks. In 1982, the risk included the election of Richard Headlee. On the other hand, blind support of Democrats has not always yielded reciprocity on the part of winning Democratic candidates. For this reason,

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it is necessary to separate rewards for political support into two categories: rewards which are collective and cannot be separated (collective goods), and those where individual rewards can be separated. Public works jobs are collective goods, while patronage is highly individualized. Public works jobs may stimulate the economy and reduce unemployment (albeit temporarily), but they are available to all segments of the population. Patronage, then, is the only way to make symbolic and individualized rewards to groups. This patronage may include jobs and preferments in return for support. Patronage has a long tradition in American politics. It is not to be confused with an insensitive and inappropriate spoils system.

VOTING, SUPPORT, AND POLITICS

Black Michiganians have generally been supportive of the Democratic party and its candidates. For the most part, this support has been enthusiastic and consistent. The major exception has been in the case of the liberal Republican governor, William Milliken. Many blacks either voted for him or failed to turn out for his opponents (e.g., William Fitzgerald in the 1978 election). Black support for Milliken was based on performance and on what Professor Charles Hamilton has called political benefits.[18] Governor Milliken appointed blacks to his executive office and cabinet, and to several commissions as well. He was also very supportive of the city of Detroit and of Mayor Coleman Young. When the governor retired, the stage was set for a young Democratic congressman to become governor. Although James Blanchard has no roots in the black community, nor does he have a record of

involvement in the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, he was supported by blacks on the recommendation of organized labor and as a reaction to the campaign of Republican conservative Richard Headlee.

The support for Blanchard was a classical reorganization of Democratic coalition politics. Blacks understood this to mean that they would share in the political benefits of control of the governor's office. These benefits had been proffered and accepted during the Milliken administration, and blacks had every reason to believe that a Democratic administration would be obligated to provide even more benefits. This has not happened. Blanchard has appointed only three blacks to high-level posts: Conrad Mallet, Jr. as his legal counsel, Dr. Gloria Smith as director of the Health Department, and S. Martin Taylor as director of the Department of Labor. In addition, two blacks are deputy directors in the Department of Mental Health.

Are these appointments consistent with black support? In spite of black support of over 95 percent, it appears that the governor has not provided his black supporters with direct and separate benefits (e.g., a seat on the Liquor Control Commission). Aside from the Summer Youth Job Program, there have been no new initiatives for economic development in the black community. Although the governor is focusing on a general program of economic revitalization for the state, the needs of the black community are not being addressed in terms consistent with black voter support.

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BLACK VOTER CHOICE AND THE CHANGING MICHIGAN POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

If the preceding discussion of Michigan politics is correct, blacks must make some careful choices in the coming years. In his 1984 State of the State Address, Governor Blanchard proposed "zero budget," i.e., no increases in most state spending obligations. He also announced a tax rollback and the elimination of 1200 state jobs. Aside from a modest increase (6 percent) in funds for higher education, refunding for the Michigan Youth Program, and an incentive scholarship for college honor students, there were no new program proposals. Welfare benefits were not discussed. Welfare recipients have had their incomes frozen since 1979. One Detroit Free Press columnist called it a "Headlee speech."[19] He asserted that "the taxcutting, budget-slashing, and no-welfare increase platform is what Headlee and the Republicans have been promoting."[20] The speech received good reviews from Republican legislative members in both houses of the state legislature. Rep. Carolyn Kilpatrick (D), who heads the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus, stated, "It's a national agenda set by the President, and I find my governor following suit. I'm troubled by that."[21]

It appears that the governor is ignoring the political analysis of the 1982 elections made by a black voter interviewed by the Michigan Chronicle. Mr. Earl Watkins, a 28-year-old resident of Detroit, observed, "The vote for Blanchard was really a vote against Headlee. And a vote against Headlee was a vote against Reagan." In the same interview, Mr. Watkins stated that he did not expect Blanchard to increase social programs in 1983. "I don't think that he can give us back

what's not there."[22] However, Mr. Watkins was very sanguine, but not predictive, about appointments in the Blanchard Administration when he asserted, "He can certainly help us in that respect."[23]

Governor Blanchard may be correct in asserting that his State of the State address set a "new course for Michigan's future." He argued that the change "reflects our philosophy for Michigan's future: We must shift from mere spending to real investment. We will spend less on welfare--without cutting benefits--and invest more in education."[24] Some observers believe that the speech was a reaction to the 1983 recall of Phillip Mastin and David Serotkin, two state senators recalled for their support of the governor's tax proposal of 1983. Other black politicians and analysts believe this speech marks a substantive shift in the Blanchard Administration's policies. Has Governor Blanchard returned to his conservative roots, or has the Michigan political climate shifted to the right? For black Michiganians, any shifts will have serious implications for their economic and political aspirations. If the speech is an attempt to build a new coalition with Republicans, anticipating their takeover of the state senate after the special elections, it could give Blanchard a relationship with Republicans similar to the relationship Milliken enjoyed with Democrats. If that coalition delivers on the Blanchard campaign theme, "Jobs, Jobs, Jobs," the governor may be able to retain support from the black elected leaders. The problem with that strategy relates to Mr. Watkins' analysis of the 1982 election. Blacks voted against Headlee's philosophy, not for Blanchard. Not only has the governor failed to deliver individual rewards, but he now seems to be promoting a philosophy that is middle-class white-oriented.

This is not promising for coalition politics or for black turnout in 1986.

If Mr. Blanchard pursues a conservative position, there is a strong possibility that he will be challenged from within his party for the nomination in 1986. Since blacks lack the numbers to force such a challenge, it will have to be a coalition-led effort. This would further stir up the turmoil of Michigan politics and increase the uncertainty for black voters.

Black voters should be warned that the old New Deal coalition social philosophy is not as reliable as it was in the fifties, sixties, and seventies. The labor movement has changed. The leadership can make political endorsements, but this does not necessarily mean membership will vote the leadership's choice. The UAW still demands respect in this state, despite the losses in the auto industry. It is still a reliable ally in local politics, but the UAW itself is undergoing political changes. With declining enrollment, it must recruit members. This means recruiting more non-autoworkers (e.g., white collar). This recruitment is bound to have an effect on the UAW political posture.

An inevitable correlate of this change is that coalition politics and policies will be more difficult to maintain. One could expect to see more conflict within the Democratic party leadership group and more conservative policy advocacy.

The other storm on the horizon is the recall movement in Michigan. The successful recall of the two state senators lends credence to the Almanac thesis that state politics is in turmoil. Behind the tax revolt

are reactions against what taxpayers perceive as excessive government spending. Although pro-recall crusaders may be aiming at particular senators, they have managed to alert all representatives of the potential consequences of voting for tax increases.

Black state legislators may be immune to recall, but they will find it more difficult to get help from white colleagues for spending for welfare, education, and health programs. White legislators will be more reluctant to co-sponsor or acquiesce to bills that involve increases in government spending. Many may conclude that they must join the call to cut government spending. This would be a disaster for poor and unemployed people, both black and white, as they need state programs to survive the recession recovery period. If Michigan manages to create an image as an anti-welfare or anti-public school state, it could see an acceleration of migration to other states.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 1984 ELECTION

The 1984 presidential election promises to be a critical election for Michigan. Will the white working class vote for Ronald Reagan despite the impact of his policies on the Michigan economy? Will black voters follow the lead of powerful black opinion makers and elected officials and support former Vice President Walter Mondale? What will be the impact on Michigan voters of the Rev. Jesse Jackson's campaign? It is too soon to make any reliable prediction on these issues, but it is fair to say that Reagan is now a known quantity, and his record will definitely be an issue in the campaign.

For blacks in the automobile industry, the choice is clear. The

UAW has endorsed Mondale. For blacks in government and education unions, similar endorsements have been made. Blacks without labor union connections must search for other political cues. The Jesse Jackson campaign has expanded the choices but has not made them any easier.

The problem for black Michiganians in a presidential election is that this state is not among the high-profile primary states. Candidates come to Michigan only to win endorsements. There is very little incentive to campaign or study the state's problems. The arrangement works well for black politicians, but leaves the voter with very little input in the preliminary presidential selection process.

Political scientist Lenneal Henderson observed:

> The black presidential vote assumes a fourfold significance. First, many political leaders and analysts consider it a barometer of political participation and influence, particularly in national politics. Second, as a largely cohesive bloc vote, it may be pivotal in close presidential elections. Third, it represents a symbolic and substantive expression of black values and preferences through interest-group articulation and mobilization. And fourth, it is an instrument of political brokering and bargaining by black leaders seeking to advance black economic, political, and policy goals through the Presidency.[25]

As it stands now, Democrats in 1984 should not have any problem attracting the black vote. The task is to register and mobilize new black voters. The Reagan Administration has made it clear that it does not intend to challenge Democrats for black votes. Accordingly, a Reagan victory in 1984 will create more problems for the black community. Reagan will have an additional four years to complete his reorganization and reorientation of the government. More importantly, a Reagan

victory would make it even more difficult to regain the lost momentum of the affirmative action programs.

The loss of the presidential campaign for Michigan Democrats would put them in a precarious situation in state gubernatorial politics. The party will have to spend more time collecting defecting white voters. Hence, it will have to pursue more conservative policies to retain the state house. These policies may force the black leadership into a more assertive race advocacy posture. As a result, the traditional coalition-making policies will be eroded. The black community can ill afford to lose membership in that coalition. Accordingly, in order to remain credible in the black community, black leaders must be prepared to sacrifice some symbolic politics for the sake of the coalition, and at the same time insist on equal rights and social justice for all people.

A conservative Michigan would be an entirely different political environment for blacks. Detroit would not become an Indianapolis, but it could become another East St. Louis, Illinois, almost forgotten in Illinois state Democratic party deliberations. Although this is unlikely, the possibility is consistent with the changing demographic and economic conditions within the state. To offset this possibility requires radical policy changes and bold leadership. Michigan black youth must be a part of that change, because through it they will inherit the politics of Flint, Pontiac, and Detroit. To prepare for 1986 and 1988, the black community must start now building for the future.

FOOTNOTES

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6. See Lester W. Milbrath, Political Participation, (Chicago, Rand, McNally & Co., 1971).
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8. See David Schwartz, Political Alienation and Political Behavior, (Chicago, Aldine Publishing Co., 1973).
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24. Tim Jones, "New Course Promises, Same Services for Less," Detroit Free Press, (January 19, 1984), p. 1.

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Chapter 5

BLACK CRIME IN MICHIGAN

Homer C. Hawkins

In focusing on crime in Michigan as it relates to blacks, a number of questions should be addressed. How do black and white crime rates compare? Are blacks or whites more often the victims of crime? What are the major causes of black crime in Michigan? How are blacks treated by the police and the courts? What, if any, are the major problems for blacks in the prison system of Michigan? These questions will serve as a starting point to a discussion of crime in Michigan as it relates to blacks specifically and to the total population generally.

CRIME RATES

In examining black crime in Michigan, the data should be viewed in light of the fact that blacks comprise about 13 percent of the total population in Michigan.[1] It also should be noted that about 63 percent of Detroit's population is black and 46 percent of the violent crimes and 23 percent of the property crimes occur there.[2] With these thoughts in mind, the data suggest a significant representation of blacks in the Michigan crime arena (see Table 1).

Table 1

Number and Percent of Persons Arrested for Crimes in Michigan, 1981, by Race

Offense	Total	Black	% Black	White	% White
Murder	873	667	76.3%	195	22.3%
Forcible Rape	1,751	1,082	61.8	635	36.3
Robbery	4,705	3,625	77.0	1,028	21.8
Aggravated Assault	8,695	4,201	47.9	4,190	47.1
Property Crimes	65,067	25,429	39.8	37,921	58.3

Source: Uniform Crime Reporting Unit Central Records Division, Michigan Department of State Police, 1981.

Of those individuals arrested in Michigan for murder in 1981, 667 or just over 76 percent were black. For forcible rape, 1,082 or nearly 62 percent were black; and for robbery, 3,625 or 77 percent were black. For aggravated assault, 4,201 or nearly 48 percent were black.[3]

With respect to property crimes, (burglary, larceny, auto theft, and arson), whites commit more of these kinds of crimes than do blacks. Of those individuals arrested for property crimes in Michigan in 1981, 25,429 or nearly 40 percent were black.[4] In sum, the data indicate that blacks commit more violent crimes and a significant share of property crimes.

VICTIMS OF CRIME

It is reasonable to assume that crimes tend to be committed

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against individuals who live in close proximity. The data substantiate this view and point to the fact that blacks represent a disproportionate number of individuals victimized by crime in Michigan. For example, in 1981, approximately 64 percent of the victims of confirmed murders in Michigan were black.[5]

There are no data for the race of victims of crimes other than homicides. However, victimization studies across the nation suggest that blacks are significantly represented in the victim category of all index offenses (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, auto theft, and arson).

As noted by Thornton and associates:

> The first nation-wide victimization surveys in the United States were sponsored by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice and published in 1967. Of the three victimization surveys sponsored by the President's Commission, the most widely known is the national survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). In the 1967 NORC survey, interviews were held in 10,000 households (containing 33,000 elderly persons) in the continental United States. The knowledgeable household respondent from each household was asked a series of questions about victimization of members of the household. This study indicated that the estimated rate of victimization for index crimes--homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and auto theft--was more than twice the rate indicated by the uniform crime reports.
>
> Beginning with the early NORC study and continuing with later surveys, victimization research demonstrates that victimization rates for personal crimes of violence, such as rape, robbery, assault, are relatively high for males, younger persons, blacks, the poor, and the urban.[6]

The typical victim of a violent crime is a young black man from a poor family in the central city. Given the high incidence of arrest of blacks for property crimes, it is reasonable to assume that blacks are also the primary victims.

CAUSES OF CRIME

There are many theories on the causes of crime. Lombroso, for example, suggested that individuals who commit crimes are those whose body makeup is very similar to those of more primitive human beings from prehistoric times.[7] Jacob's research on chromosomal abnormalities and the XXY syndrome led to her hypothesis that there is a link between violent offenders and chromosomal imbalance.[8] Solomon advanced the idea that the young child whose needs go unattended has the potential for the development of reactive rage. He suggested that there is a possibility of later violent behavior if this type of individual feels that his needs are being unmet by society.[9] Sutherland hypothesized that criminal behavior is a product of social interaction and that criminal behavior is behavior that is learned.[10]

In an attempt to clarify the reasons for black crime, some writers have suggested that blacks are simply more apt to be involved in crime. Others believe that the environment of blacks has affected their life chances and the way they function. These writers argue that there are more basic issues that must be studied in an analysis of black crime--issues such as the effects of unemployment, lack of education, poverty, and poor housing. These analysts call attention to the interactional process that is part and parcel of being unemployed, undereducated, poor, and living in a deteriorating neighborhood. Crime in the cities seems to be a spin-off of the effects of varying kinds of discrimination that cannot be controlled by the black population. Urban crime also seems to be closely related to the economic situation and its impact on minorities.

Unemployment has been cited as a major cause of crime, and this was recognized decades ago. In 1923, a President's Conference on Unemployment found that:

> Times of crisis are times of unemployment and this means economic distress for thousands of workers. The possible effect of unemployment on workers' morale must also be considered. When society refuses participation in its organized activities of production, the pariah of industry (as the unemployed workman regards himself) usually responds in one of two ways. If his personality be weak, he accepts the social verdict of his uselessness to the world. He sinks into a hopeless and listless indifference to his own future and the needs of industry. If his personality be strong, on the other hand, he seeks mental compensation for his wounded pride and the incessant rebuffs of job hunting. He finds that in refusing to accept society's code of conduct he becomes a rebel.[11]

Many studies have called attention to the relationship of business cycles to criminality, showing that criminality tends to increase in times of economic crisis. In such times, blacks and other minorities are the ones most affected by the vagaries of a stagnant economy. This suggests that there are many social consequences involved in changes in business cycles. In the 1930s, this phenomenon was examined in the Wickersham Reports. The question was posed regarding reasons for criminal behavior, and it was noted in this report that:

> If a nation or community wishes to approach more and more closely toward law observance and law enforcement, what conditions will it seek to establish for the occupation of the individuals and the economic life of the community?
>
> The first answer suggested by the data at hand is security of employment. This means removing the fluctuations that cause recurrent unemployment; and meanwhile, since that task is a momentous one, establish revisions to prevent the burden of present conditions from falling with crushing impact upon those members of society whose other defenses are already weakened.[12]

At present, the unemployment situation in Michigan leaves blacks in a deficit situation. The unemployment figures show that the unemployment rate for the white population in the state of Michigan for the month of October 1983 was 10.4 percent.[13] For the black population, it was 23.7 percent. The 1980 census reveals that white unemployment in Michigan was 8.7 percent, and in central cities it was 8.3 percent. For the black population, the total unemployment for the state was 18.1 percent, and in central cities it was 18.6 percent.[14] Clearly, unemployment for blacks was substantially higher than it was for whites. One significant finding is that the unemployment rate for whites living in central cities is far lower than the rate for blacks living in central cities. This means that a basic difference between central city whites and central city blacks is that a far greater percentage of whites are working.

In terms of statewide poverty status, 6.1 percent of Michigan's white families were below the poverty level in 1980. For the central cities, the figure was 9 percent. With regard to blacks, the respective numbers were 23.5 percent for the state and 24.6 percent for the central cities.[15] This indicates that the statewide rates are nearly four times as high for black families, and the central city rates are nearly three times as high. When individuals are unemployed and live in poverty, the need to survive may cause them to turn to crime.

With regard to educational levels, there are also glaring differences between blacks and whites in Michigan. For white males 25 years old and over living in urban areas, 71.5 percent graduated from high school. Of those who live in central cities, 65.1 percent graduated

from high school. For white females, the respective numbers are 69,7 percent and 62.6 percent. For black males 25 years old and over living in urban areas in this state, 52.9 percent graduated from high school; in the central cities, 51.5 percent graduated. The respective numbers for black females 25 years and over are 57.4 and 56.6 percent.[16] These glaring differences in the educational levels of Michigan's white and black citizens have serious implications for employability.

Another issue of central importance is where and under what conditions an individual lives. In order to compare housing conditions in different cities and between different groups, it is necessary to use the housing census. However, the housing census has made some significant changes that make it difficult to compare the housing situation of blacks and whites for 1980. As a matter of fact, the housing census no longer gives information relating to substandard housing. The reason for this is that it was felt that enumerators in evaluating substandard housing used too much subjectivity. Consequently, the statements relative to substandard housing that were used in 1970 were taken out of the housing census for 1980. This meant that analysts had to devise their own categories for making statements about housing conditions. Some researchers have selected size of dwelling, number of persons per room, and age of dwelling as the characteristics to be measured.

In 1970, 5.9 percent of Michigan blacks were living in substandard housing, as compared to 3.6 percent of whites.[17] According to 1980 census data for white housing in Michigan, the median number of rooms in owner-occupied units was 5.8 and in renter-occupied units, 4.0.

With regard to persons per unit in owner-occupied units, the figure was 2.66 and for renter-occupied units 1.73. In persons per room, the number of individuals in owner-occupied units with more than 1.01 persons per room was 2 percent and in renter-occupied units, 3 percent. (More than 1.01 persons per room is considered an overcrowded situation.)[18] For age of structure, 24.7 percent of whites lived in dwellings built in 1939 or earlier, and 19.4 percent lived in structures built between 1970 and March 1980.[19]

For blacks, the median number of rooms in owner-occupied units was 6.0, and in renter-occupied units it was 4.5. In persons per unit in owner-occupied units, the median number was 3.16, and in renter-occupied units it was 2.12. In persons per room, the number of individuals in owner-occupied units with more than 1.01 persons per room was 7.0 percent, and in renter-occupied units it was approximately 7 percent.[20] For age of structure, 38.4 percent of blacks lived in dwellings built in 1939 or earlier, and 8 percent lived in structures that were built between 1970 and March 1980.[21]

These data indicate that blacks were living in structures that were a little larger, more overcrowded, and older. Based upon the selected categories, the findings indicate that blacks are living in conditions that are inferior to those of whites.

The environment and life circumstances of individuals strongly affect the way they function. With regard to unemployment, education, poverty, and housing, blacks are in a deficit situation. All of these areas are interrelated and all impact upon the black population. Oftentimes, young blacks attend a ghetto high school and receive an inferior

education. Many times, they drop out without completing high school. This means that because their educational level is low, the kinds of jobs they can get will be entry level jobs. Examples of these kinds of jobs would be as employees in fast food restaurants, orderlies in hospitals, workers in laundries and car washes, and similar forms of employment. This kind of employment is most affected by changes in the economy and is least protected by unions. This insecurity leads young adults into a tenuous existence.. Unemployment becomes a way of life for many young adults, and they end up existing below the poverty level. The cycle may continue if individuals marry and have families that repeat the pattern. Individuals continue to live in the same area because they are unable to afford anything else. This whole process locks blacks into the ghetto. As LaFlore has written:

> Our neighborhood was the worst. It was truly crime infested. Prostitution, robbery, drugs, murder--everything you could possibly think of was going on in the six or seven blocks where we lived. The favorite past-time of the community was committing crimes. It was the thing to do.
>
> From the time I was small, I saw all that going on and assumed that that was the way the world was--the way things were supposed to be. That was all I knew. When you are brought up in the ghetto-you are really confined to that certain area. My parents did not make enough money to take us on picnics, to amusement parks, or to fairs. We did not have a car. When I was coming up, I didn't know that suburbs existed. I didn't know we lived in the slums; I didn't know what a ghetto was. I didn't even realize my parents were poor. That was the only sign of life I saw. So I thought that was the way all life was. Everyone else was committing crimes and getting away with it, so I assumed that I could commit crimes and get away with them too.[22]

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

In discussing the criminal justice system, the focus will be on the police, on the court system's contacts with blacks, and on prisons. The basic questions usually asked are: In what ways, if any, are blacks treated differently from whites by the police? What, if any, are the differences for blacks in the length of sentences for similar crimes? Is the probability of going to prison greater for blacks than for whites?

The Police

There is a widespread feeling among blacks that white police officers treat blacks differently from whites. The image of the white police officer is different in the black community than it is in the white, suburban community. Contact between white police officers and blacks in the ghetto often involves an adversary relationship. A policeman may have had negative experiences with blacks and may therefore assume that all blacks must be treated differently from whites because blacks are potentially dangerous. Individuals with this mind-set tend to respond differently when approaching black suspects. A Detroit police officer, speaking in a class taught by this writer, indicated that when he got out of his patrol car in the ghetto, he more often had a tendency to pull his revolver than he did when he was in the suburban white areas of Detroit. He stated that when he stopped a black, he felt the situation was potentially dangerous. He went on to indicate that in other areas of the city, he did not have that same kind of feeling. He noted that his feelings were not based on someone telling him that something might happen. Rather, he based this on his own personal experiences.

Much can also be said from the other point of view. As Kennedy pointed out:

> Many blacks in Detroit believe that they have received unfair treatment at the hands of white officers of the Detroit police department. Harassment through the use of trigger words, racial epitaphs and high-handed treatment have been seen as reasons for antagonisms between neighborhood residents and police officers.[23]

The above illustrates the fact that police officers can, at times, relate to blacks in a manner that would cause blacks to be hostile and angry during a situation where they are forced to interact with a police officer. In the suburbs, 10 or 15 individuals standing on a corner may be considered a group, whereas 4 or 5 individuals standing on a street corner in a ghetto may be viewed as a mob. It is this type of differential treatment that leads to difficulties between white police officers and the black community. Jacobs has commented:

> ...blacks judge the police as more corrupt, less fair, tougher and more excitable than do the respondents in white neighborhoods. When respondents in this biracial study were asked whether "people in this neighborhood are treated as well as people living in other sections of the city," 40 percent of blacks, 15 percent of the white working class respondents, and 7 percent of white middle class respondents answered in the negative.[24]

This survey indicates that blacks believe they are treated differently than their white counterparts. This finding can be generalized to many black communities throughout the nation. Blacks tend to feel that they have been and will be treated differently in their interactions with the police. In many cases, these feelings are based on fact. Incidences of police brutality in black neighborhoods are well documented. The authoritative nature of many interactions between the police and black neighborhoods is potentially volatile from the outset. Often the

interaction will turn into a negative situation, leading to escalating mistrust and mutual hostility.

Black-on-black crime presents an interesting dilemma. Without adequate police protection in the black neighborhood, blacks will be the ones to suffer. Many elderly blacks live in fear of robbery or murder. Some have lived in communities for many years and have watched their neighborhoods change. Now they are fearful of going out, even in the daytime. Many elderly persons have their social security and retirement checks sent directly to the bank because they are afraid that if they go to the bank they will be robbed before they return home. The street hoodlums know when the checks are being cashed and lie in wait to rob their elderly weak victims. Police are often resented and feared in black neighborhoods, yet their protection is needed by the elderly and by other citizens as well.

Sentencing Procedures

Another critical factor to be examined is the sentencing procedure. It is often stated that blacks are treated more harshly than whites for the same crimes. For crimes such as homicide, assault, robbery, and sexual offenses, the probability of going to prison is less for whites. If whites are convicted of a particular crime, their length of imprisonment may be substantially reduced because of race. Zalman, in his study of sentencing in Michigan, found that non-whites go to prison more often than whites when tried for the following crimes: homicide, assault, robbery, sex, burglary, and larceny. With respect to the length of prison terms, there seem to be fewer instances of

racial disparity. There are significant differences, however, in the following crime categories: sex, drugs, burglary, and larceny. Zalman noted that when all the results are considered, and an across-the-board evaluation is made, there is evidence of distinct differences in the treatment of whites as compared to non-whites.[25]

Zalman also looked at sentencing issues from what he described as criminal justice processing variables: presence and type of attorney, custodial status at time of sentencing, and method of conviction.[26] The type of attorney has certain social/economic ramifications that could be translated into racial implications. Custodial status at the time of sentencing is also a statement with regard to social/economic status of the individual being sentenced. Often the individual who is poor is forced to remain incarcerated because of inability to make bail. Finally, a request for a jury trial has been found to have an impact on the sentence.

Zalman's study indicated that an individual who is incarcerated at the time of sentencing has a greater probability of going to prison for crimes of homicide, robbery, sexual assault, drugs, burglary, larceny, fraud, and weapons offenses. In larceny offenses, if the individual has a court-appointed attorney, is in jail at the time of sentencing, and asks for a jury trial, the probability of being incarcerated is increased substantially. Zalman also found that if an individual is able to retain a private attorney, this will reduce the probability of being incarcerated in cases of assault, larceny, and weapons offenses. Economic status, then, determines whether an individual can retain a competent attorney and whether an individual can make bail. If a suspect

is brought before the judge and has been in jail prior to the sentencing, the judge's decision appears to be influenced. If a person has money, the probability of going to prison appears to be greatly reduced. When the economic status of the average black is compared to that of the average white, the disparity becomes obvious. In addition, the probability of being in a lower social/economic category is substantially increased for blacks.

What all this suggests is that the decision to place an individual in prison is strongly affected by criminal justice variables. The negative ramifications that stem from these criminal justice variables seem to impact more heavily on blacks. Not only are blacks discriminated against because of race, but they are also subjected to other kinds of discrimination because of factors that are more pronounced because of race.

Prisons

Blacks are disproportionately represented in the Michigan prison population. Although this is not new, it is disheartening. Many young blacks are incarcerated, and much young black talent will be in prison as we move into the twenty-first century. In 1980 in the United States as a whole, approximately 48 percent of the inmates in state prisons were black (140,370 white inmates and 131,978 black inmates). This should be considered in light of the fact that blacks comprise nearly 12 percent of the total population in the United States.[27] In 18 states out of the 50, black inmates are the majority. The states with the highest percentage of black prisoners were Maryland, with nearly

23 percent of the state population black and 76 percent of the prison population black; and Louisiana, with about 29 percent of the state population black and nearly 72 percent of the prison population black. Other states with high percentages of black prisoners were Mississippi, New Jersey, and Georgia (see Table 2).

Table 2

Percent of Blacks in General Population and Prison Population, 1980

State	% Blacks General Population	% Blacks in Prison
Maryland	22.7%	76.0%
Louisiana	29.4	71.8
Mississippi	35.2	66.7
New Jersey	12.6	61.5
Georgia	26.8	60.2
Michigan	12.9	59.5

Source: Andrew Hacker, ed., A Statistical Portrait of the American People (New York: The Viking Press, 1983), p. 34 and pp. 223-24.

Michigan has nearly 13 percent of the state population black and nearly 60 percent of the prison population black.[28]

Why do so many blacks go to prison? First of all, blacks commit more crimes that lead to a prison sentence. In addition, studies indicate that blacks are discriminated against in the court system with regard to actual sentencing and length of sentencing for particular crimes. The reasons for black crime and black imprisonment involve

various factors, including unemployment, poverty, lack of education, and dilapidated neighborhoods. The totality of these factors leads to a sense of hopelessness, frustration, and disillusionment. Crime can seem like a way out.

Whatever the cause, the fact remains that there are large numbers of blacks in Michigan prisons. It is clear that the percentage of blacks in prison goes far beyond their representation in the total population. Fox and Volakakis studied this problem in 1944 and found that: "Negroes are sentenced to prison in Michigan with significantly greater frequency in proportion to the total population than are whites."[29]

In attempting to present reasons for this finding, Fox and Volakakis referred to Wier's statement that blacks migrated to Michigan and settled in cities which had already established a high rate of delinquency, and blacks tended to conform to this framework of functioning. They also noted Taft's suggestion that urbanization and crime are closely related, and because of the urbanization of blacks they have tended to commit more and more crimes. Finally, they referred to Reckless's view that blacks have a greater problem with adjustment in the United States than do whites and hence have greater difficulty conforming to the law.[30]

Fox and Volakakis reported that in 1940 the population in Michigan was 5,256,106, of which approximately 4 percent were black. With 4 percent of the population being black, the state's prison population was 20 percent black. By 1950, the population of Michigan was 6,371,756, with 7 percent being black. The proportion of blacks in the prison population had risen to 40 percent.[31] As was noted earlier, a continuation of this trend was evident in 1980, with blacks constituting nearly 13 percent

of the general population[32] and 59.5 percent of the prison population.[33]

Another critical issue is recidivism. The Michigan Department of Corrections has no codified information centering directly on this topic. However, in a study done by the Department of Corrections focusing on parole risks, some interesting suggestions were put forth.[34] In an analysis of a random sample of inmates placed on parole, five categories were examined: non-recidivists, technical violators (violation of paroles), misdemeanants, nonviolent recidivists, and violent recidivists. In the first four categories, there were no significant differences between white and black parolees. With regard to violent crimes leading to the return of individuals to prison, the study found that twice as many blacks as whites returned to prison for committing violent crimes.

The major problem with the prison system of Michigan and with that of the United States in general is that prisons are warehouses for the maintenance of human beings and not for their rehabilitation. This problem is recognized nationally and statewide. Because of limited money, however, the state of Michigan is unable to provide the kinds of programs that are more than custodial. Many inmates are not being trained to do anything constructive upon their return to society. In essence, what takes place is that they are the same individuals as they were when they entered prison. Given the mobility of our society in terms of technical advancement, the inmate may be worse off at the time of release than when entering the correctional system. Thus, the probability of return is high.

It is essential that more be done by the Department of Corrections

to rehabilitate inmates. Rehabilitation should be in the form of more programs that would improve the technical skills of inmates and also provide them with an opportunity for further academic training. Presently there is a substantial program at the high school level, but more needs to be done toward the provision of broadened opportunities for college level and technical training.

What can be expected when a released inmate returns to the same neighborhood? The individual will begin to associate with the same kinds of people and will begin doing the same kinds of things in order to survive. These efforts at survival will lead to the same kinds of activities that caused the former imprisonment. The final outcome will be a return to the prison system.

Some action in the area of improved education for inmates has taken place. Congressman John Conyers and Senator Claiborne Pell have introduced legislation that would make $25 million available over a three-year period for the education of individuals in prison. The proposed bill is the Federal Corrections Assistance Act. In reflecting on the problem of recidivism, Conyers stated:

> Perhaps now is the time for Congress to make a solid commitment to inmate rehabilitation with the expectation that upon release the great majority of inmates will have acquired the skills, training and knowledge that will permit them to be gainfully employed and to lead productive lives in society.[35]

Studies cited by Conyers point to the importance of inmate education. A study at the correctional center for women in Virginia indicated that the recidivism rate diminished in relation to the extent of training and education that the inmates received. While the general inmate

population had a recidivism rate of 34 percent, inmates who had completed a business education course had a recidivism rate of only 4 percent.[36] Conyers also cited the finding of a study done in the Ohio prison system that the longer inmates were involved in education and training, the less likely was the chance that they would become recidivists. He also referred to a study by the National Center for Research and Vocational Education at Ohio State University. This study identified Connecticut's Somners Correctional Institution as having one of the nation's most successful vocational education programs. Upon release, 75 percent of the institutions's inmate participants found employment; and during their enrollment in the program, their motivation and achievement levels greatly improved.[37]

Researchers from Michigan community colleges studied post-secondary educational programs for inmates of Michigan Department of Corrections facilities. They found that educational programs tended to reduce recidivism. One Michigan Community College, Schoolcraft College, showed an 18 percent recidivism rate for female parolees who had completed their child care nursing assistance program. This is well below the expected rate of 45 percent for their untrained counterparts. The Michigan Community College study also cited other studies showing that education helps to reduce recidivism.[38] For example, Marken compared teaching literature to prison inmates and to college students and concluded that prisoners benefit greatly from the experience because it reestablishes a sense of identity. Buttram and Duscwicz, in a study of Pennsylvania ex-offenders, found that those enrolled in post-secondary education programs violated parole or were arrested less frequently than ex-offenders not enrolled

in such programs. In his doctoral dissertation, Walford cited his finding that education furloughees made significantly higher adjustment scores than those of a comparison group and noted that education accomplished its primary goal of assisting individuals to become responsible community members.[39]

There is a growing body of literature that suggests that recidivism can be reduced by retraining inmates while they are in prison. Persons leaving prison must have a feeling that they have a chance to succeed. They must be able to feel that their training will lead them to gainful employment. It is critical that individuals leaving the prison setting become employed and stay employed. If they are not working, they will likely attempt to survive through the same kinds of activities that sent them to prison in the first place.

CONCLUSION

The data indicate that blacks commit more violent crimes and are more often the victims of these crimes. In addition, blacks have a greater probability of going to prison and for longer times than do their white counterparts. The reasons for crime are difficult to ascertain. However, urbanization, lack of education, unemployment, poverty, and dilapidated neighborhoods all contribute. In many cases, it is the compilation of several or all of these factors that increases the probability of black crime. If there is a desire to reduce crime, societal inequities and inadequacies must be eradicated. Some of the reasons for crime have long been known, but there has been a consistent attitude that has said either overtly or covertly that the reasons are known but "we don't care."

The fact that it is blacks who suffer the most as victims may mean that even less may be done in the future.

With respect to the criminal justice system, the effects of discrimination in the court system must be reduced. It is also important to provide funding that will allow Departments of Corrections to begin to rehabilitate prison inmates. As long as funding is at a level where custodial concerns are more important than rehabilitation concerns, our prisons will continue to be warehouses for the disadvantaged.

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Chapter 6

BLACK YOUTH IN MICHIGAN

Algea Othella Harrison

The purpose of this chapter is to examine selected aspects of the lives of black youth (persons under 18 years of age) in Michigan. The economic and social conditions of blacks in Michigan have a profound impact on black youth. Although social systems have shaped the lives of all black people, they have made the young as a group especially vulnerable to adverse environments. Currently, the economic and social conditions in the nation and in the State of Michigan have fostered an environment in which the ability and willingness of citizens to nurture and protect children has declined. The decrease in federal support for social services, two recessions in the past decade, and high unemployment in the automobile industry have created havoc with Michigan's fiscal climate. It is important, therefore, that attention is focused on incidence data that reflect the vulnerability of youth to these conditions.

An alternative approach could be applied to the issue by presenting incidence figures that reflect the accomplishments of black youth. Such an approach could magnify the strengths of families and could report how they are succeeding in nurturing and fostering their children against overwhelming odds. The successes of youth development programs initiated by various black community institutions, such as the churches, the N.A.A.C.P., and the Urban League could be highlighted as guidelines

for future action. The movement of black youth into mainstream society through higher education affirmative action programs, political processes, and other avenues could also be stressed in a discussion of black youth in Michigan.

Yet to address the issue from these perspectives would represent a failure to identify and note alarming trends in the lives of young persons who desperately need the attention of all concerned citizens. The young are the most powerless segment of a minority population constantly confronted with a difficult and disruptive social and economic climate. All blacks are affected by the consequences of this negative environment, but it is the young who are the most vulnerable.

This section of the report will document certain areas that are indicators of the negative impact on black youth of the conditions presently existing in the State of Michigan. For the purpose of this discussion, the selected indicators are incidence figures that reflect problems within social systems. The indicators discussed are infant mortality rates, figures on life expectancy and cause of death, data regarding family structure and child abuse, and unemployment rates. Descriptive data regarding frequency numbers and urban/rural geographical locations are also presented. Finally, recommendations for the political system are included.

BLACK YOUTH IN MICHIGAN

In 1980, the population of the State of Michigan was 9,262,078 of whom 12.9 percent were black. The black population continues to be mainly concentrated in the urban (17.8 percent) as compared to the

rural (1.2 percent) areas. The largest concentration of blacks in Michigan in 1980 was in the City of Detroit which was 63.1 percent black.[1]

Persons 18 years and younger represented approximately 30 percent of all residents in the Detroit Area, as well as in the State of Michigan.[2] The number of black youth in the population has increased since 1960, although the number of black females under five years of age decreased from 1970 to 1980.[3] The figures indicate that in the population of black youth under 15 years of age there were more males than females in Michigan in 1980. The data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency by Sex of Black Youth in Population of the State of Michigan 1960, 1970, 1980

	1960	1970	1980
Male			
Under 5 years	52,025	55,625	55,822
5 to 9 years	46,713	56,752	63,153
10 to 14 years	35,247	60,429	62,724
15 to 19 years	22,813	51,326	60,400
Female			
Under 5 years	52,271	55,261	54,728
5 to 9 years	46,475	56,669	62,564
10 to 14 years	35,483	59,860	62,121
15 to 19 years	24,445	53,361	62,323

Source: Bureau of Census, 1980. Detailed Population Characteristics, Michigan. Table 20. Age by Race and Sex: 1910-1980, pp. 24-70.

INFANT MORTALITY RATES

In the period 1970-1980, the racial composition of live births in Michigan changed. Live births of white infants declined from 83.8 percent of all live births in 1970 to 82 percent in 1980.[4] On the other hand, live births of black infants increased from 15.7 percent of the total in 1970 to 16.6 percent in 1980.[5] Similarly, in 1980 the fetal death rate showed a racial differential. (Fetal death refers to stillbirths that have passed through 20 weeks of gestation or to fetuses weighing 400 grams or more.) For whites, the fetal death rate was 6.9 per 1,000 births, while the fetal death rate for other races was 78.3 percent higher at 12.3.[6] The young age of mothers increased the probability of complications at birth for infants.[7] For young mothers (between 15 and 19 years), the fetal death ratio per 1,000 live births for whites was 7.7 and for other than white, 12.5.[8] Similar patterns of association between fetal death and prenatal medical check-ups were shown for white and other than white fetuses. The highest rate was for mothers with no prenatal medical checkups.

The racial differential in infant mortality (death occurring to an individual less than one year of age) rate has increased since 1950. The rate for other than white infants of 35.6 per 1,000 in 1950 was 40 percent higher than that for white infants (25.4). In 1980, the rate of 23.1 per 1,000 for other than white infants was 120 percent higher than that for white infants (10.5 per 1,000).[9] Of the deaths of other than white infants, 15 percent were attributed to "all other and

ill-defined conditions originating in the perinatal* period," compared to 6 percent of the deaths of white infants.[10]

For nonwhites, the age of the mother was a factor in infant deaths. The infant death ratio was 25.6 for nonwhite mothers between the ages of 15-19 years as compared to 20.4 for mothers 20-24 years, 23.6 for mothers 25-29 years, and 20.0 for mothers 30-39 years. For older mothers, statistics were not available.[11]

In a 1982 survey of 35 states and 17 cities by the Food Research and Action Center, a Washington based advocacy group, it was found that black women in Detroit and Michigan had the highest infant mortality rates.[12] In 1982, the black infant mortality rate was 26.9 in Detroit and 24.6 in Michigan, based on deaths per 1,000 births. The rate for whites in Detroit was 9.4 per 1,000 births. Also in Detroit, 17 percent of all black women who gave birth had less than five prenatal visits to a doctor.[13] Two-thirds of all infant deaths were linked to low birth weights; and twice as many black women, compared to white women, had low birth weight infants.[14]

Concerned professionals and other citizens have repeatedly pointed out the major factors associated with the increase in black infant mortality. Among such factors in the State of Michigan are unemployment, jobless families without health insurance, problems in the delivery of health care, cutbacks by the Reagan administration in federal programs for the poor, budget cuts in the Department of Public Health, and failure in the delivery of preventive information to a

*Perinatal refers to the period extending from before delivery from the 28th week of gestation through the first 7 days after delivery.

needy population.[15] In addition, many young black males and females fail to seek and use birth control information. Currently, less than 10 percent of school age youth in Michigan are exposed to sex education.[16] The failure of young, pregnant women to avail themselves of prenatal care is of utmost concern to medical professionals. The high infant mortality rates are indicators that Michigan's social institutions are not functioning effectively. The most serious consequences fall on the young and dependent members of the community.

LIFE EXPECTANCY AND CAUSES OF DEATH

In 1980, the life expectancy for nonwhite male infants was lower than that for nonwhite female infants (73.3 years, compared to 76.9 years).[17] This sex differential for life expectancy is supported by the incidence figures of number of deaths by "all other races" (nonwhites), for persons under 19 years of age.[18] There is a higher death figure for nonwhite males under 19 years of age, as compared to nonwhite females. The incidence figures are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Number of Deaths by Age and Sex for All Other Races in Michigan Residents under 19 Years of Age, 1980

Age in Years	Total	All other races M	F
Under 1	596	315	281
1-4	85	59	26
5-9	32	18	14
10-14	44	30	14
15-19	121	86	35

Source: Michigan Department of Public Health, Michigan Health Statistics, 1980 (Lansing, MI, 1982). Table 2.3, Death Rates by Age, Race, and Sex, Michigan Residents, 1980. P. 114.

Some of the crucial areas for preventive and corrective actions to increase the life expectancy for nonwhite youth are reflected in the leading causes of death for this group between the ages of 5 and 24. The data are presented in Tables 3 and 4.[19]

Table 3

Leading Causes of Death and Cause-Specific Rates for Michigan Nonwhite Males between Ages of 5-24, 1980

Years	Rank	cause of death	Number	Specific rate
5-14 Years	1.	Accidents and Adverse Effects	26	17.7
	2.	Homicide	6	4.1
	3.	Malignant Neoplasms	5	3.4
	4-5.	Anemias	2	1.4
		Diseases of the Heart	2	1.4
		All Causes	48	32.7
15-24 Years	1.	Homicide and Legal Intervention	128	94.1
	2.	Accidents and Adverse Effects	47	34.6
	3.	Suicide	18	13.2
	4.	Malignant Neoplasms	11	8.1
	5.	Diseases of the Heart	10	7.4
		All Causes	248	182.3

Source: Michigan Department of Public Health, Michigan Health Statistics, 1980 (Lansing, MI 1982). Table 2.8 Leading Causes of Death and Cause-Specific Rates by Age, Sex, and Race, Michigan Residents, 1980. p. 129.

Table 4

Leading Causes of Death and Cause-Specific Rates for Michigan Nonwhite Females between Ages of 5-24, 1980

Years	Rank cause of death	Number	Specific rate
5-14 years	1. Accidents and Adverse Effects	9	6.2
	2. Homicide and Legal Intervention	7	4.8
	3. Malignant Neoplasms	5	3.5
	4. Diseases of the Heart	2	1.4
	5. Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases and Allied Conditions	1	0.7
	All Causes	28	19.3
15-24 years	1. Homicide and Legal Intervention	45	29.8
	2. Accidents and Adverse Effects	19	13.2
	3. Diseases of the Heart	8	5.5
	4. Cerebrovascular Diseases	6	4.2
	5. Malignant Neoplasms	5	3.5
	All Causes	126	87.2

Source: Michigan Department of Public Health. Michigan Health Statistics, 1980 (Lansing, MI, 1982). Table 2.8, Leading Causes of Death and Cause-Specific Rates by Age, Sex, and Race, Michigan Residents, 1980. p. 133.

The two major causes of death (homicide and accidents) for both male and female nonwhite youth varied by sex. For males, 15-24 years of age, the homicide rate was 94.1 per 1,000, compared to 29.8 for females. For accidents, the rates were 34.6 for males, compared to 13.2 for females. Suicide as a cause of death was more prevalent among nonwhite young males than among nonwhite young females. The data indicate that both sexes were involved in the juvenile criminal justice system. Within community organizations in Detroit there is considerable debate about ways to deal effectively with these young offenders. Most agree that the economic deprivation suffered by many youths will continue to provoke their criminal activities.[20]

Between the ages of 15-24 years, the leading causes of death for nonwhite males were homicide and legal intervention, accidents and adverse effects, and suicide. Clearly, these are indicators of a hostile and adverse environment in which young black males must live. On the other hand, the black community can feel victimized by the criminal activities of young black males. The implication of the disproportionate number of males affected negatively by social forces has been to reduce the number of males available for marriage, supporting families, making input into the socializing process, and providing role models for others.[21] Thus, the economic and social status of the black community has been undermined.

FAMILY STRUCTURE

The provision of a supportive and protective environment for black youth in Michigan is facilitated by such traditional social

institutions as family, church, schools, governments, and social security agencies. Generally, the family system is seen by society as the major socializing agent. A family system can be described by its functional aspects and by its structure. Information regarding how black families function is available elsewhere.[22] The purpose of this discussion is to highlight incidence figures which indicate the vulnerability of black youth. Consequently, census data are used to discuss the black family system in Michigan.

For purposes of the Census Bureau, a family consists of a householder and one or more other persons related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption, and living in the same household. All persons in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. Further, a child is a son, daughter, stepchild, or adopted child of the householder regardless of the child's age or marital status. The incidence figures regarding the family structure of black youth in Michigan by urban and rural geographical areas are presented in Table 5.

BEST COPY

Table 5

Family Structure of Selected Black Youth under 18 Years of Age, by Urban and Rural Geographical Areas, State of Michigan, 1980

Family type by presence of own children	State	Urban	Rural
Families	277,202	270,720	6,482
Families with own children under 18 years	174,512	171,076	3,436
Married couple families with own children under 18 years	81,135	78,767	2,368
Female householder, no husband present, with own children under 18 years	86,027	85,102	925

Source: Bureau of the Census, 1980. General Population Characteristics, Michigan, U.S. Department of Commerce, Table 21. Household and Family Characteristics by Race and Spanish Origin, pp. 24-73.

The data indicate that a large percentage of black youth in Michigan were living in urban areas in families headed by females. From 1970 to 1980 in Metropolitan Detroit, with a large concentration of blacks, the number of female-headed families with children under 18 increased 87 percent (1980 total 125,937), while the national figure increased 67 percent.[23]

Households headed by females need not be considered unsuitable home environments for rearing children. Indeed, social scientists have documented the black community support systems and networks that bolster these types of families so they can foster productive and positive environments for children. On the other hand, credence must be given

to the potential vulnerability of children living in this type of family structure. Families headed by females have a poverty rate six times that of male-headed households.[24]

The existence of the high rate of households headed by females is a reflection of the negative impact of a social policy that provides financial support to a family only when there is no male present. Yet it must also be acknowledged that economic reasons are only one of the many determinants of the incidence figures of a large number of youth living in households headed by females. To properly address the issue, all probable determinants must be explored so that appropriate remedial and preventive actions can be taken.

CHILD ABUSE

The children of Michigan have legal protection from abuse by parents through the Child Protection Law, which requires other adult members of society to report suspected incidence of abuse and neglect. As described by law, child abuse means "harm or threatened harm of a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare which occurs through negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care."[25]

According to a national study of the incidence and severity of child abuse and neglect, maltreated children can be found in all income groups, and incidence rates for blacks and for whites are almost identical.[26] Nevertheless, children from low-income families are much more likely to suffer maltreatment than are children from high-income families. This finding supports the explanation that environmental and

family stresses associated with low income contribute to the maltreatment of children, since child abuse, correctly understood, is also a symptom of family crisis.[27] The state-wide data for Michigan black children identified as victims of child abuse/neglect are presented in Table 6.[28]

Table 6

Frequency of Child Abuse/Neglect by Sex for Black Youth in Michigan in Years 1980-83

Age	FY 80-81			FY 81-82			FY 82-83		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
B-3	981	947	1928	1054	978	2032	1139	1071	2210
4-7	849	742	1591	906	863	1769	862	814	1676
8-11	733	732	1465	825	844	1669	867	776	1643
12+	602	908	1510	774	1023	1797	735	1099	1834
Total	3165	3329	6494	3559	3708	7267	3603	3760	7363

Source: Michigan Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division, PSMIS PS-31F

The data indicate a steady increase in the overall incidence figures of black youth being subjected to child abuse/neglect. Clearly, the young members of the black population are suffering directly from the social and economic conditions prevalent in Michigan for black families.

BEST COPY

UNEMPLOYMENT AND DROPOUT RATES

The inability of nonwhite youth to find employment is a source of frustration for them and their families. The economic decline from recessions in Michigan has exacerbated the problem. In 1980, the unemployment rates for nonwhite youth in the State of Michigan were approximately twice as high as for white youths.[29] In metropolitan Detroit in 1980, 37 percent of the youth were unemployed and the rate for black youth was 65 percent.[30]

There is a close relationship between dropout rates from educational institutions and unemployment rates. Many black young people drop out of school and are therefore poorly prepared to enter the labor market. The high dropout rates are a source of concern for families, public school personnel, and education professionals. The statewide dropout rates (percent) for black youth in Michigan are presented in Table 7.[31]

Table 7

Statewide Dropout Rates Grades 9-12 by Grade and Sex for Black Youth in Michigan, 1980-81

Grade	Females	Males
Nine	5.22%	6.95%
Ten	8.79	11.64
Eleven	8.98	11.11
Twelve	8.74	10.69
Total	7.73	9.85

Source: Michigan Department of Education. Statewide Dropout Rates by Racial-Ethnic Group, 1980-81.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter was to report data from selected indicators of problems among segments of the black youth population in Michigan. The picture is bleak, yet it is the reality for Michigan's black youth in the 1980s.

Many black infants are faced with an uncertain future from the moment of conception because of the high incidence of teenage pregnancies and lack of prenatal care. It is apparent that families, black institutions, health care delivery systems, and various social agencies have failed to protect black youth from child abuse and sexual exploitation and to inform them regarding their human reproductive systems and the accompanying personal responsibilities.

Some black youth feel alienated from their environments and act out their frustrations in self-destructive ways, increasingly becoming vulnerable to the criminal element in the community, dropping out of school, and joining the ranks of the unemployed. The failures of families, black institutions, law enforcement agencies, the juvenile justice system, and educational institutions are seen in these social conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Political action should be undertaken on behalf of black youth since they are, for the most part, a non-voting population. Political action should have as its objective legislation that will alleviate the social and economic conditions of black families and their communities. Some recommendations are listed below.

1. Increased funding of existing federal programs that finance or provide child health service, including Maternal and Child and Crippled Children's Service (Title V of the Social Security Act) and Medicaid (Title XIX of the Social Security Act.)[32]

2. Legislation that will fund programs to promote more effective delivery of health services, including expanded and improved support of neighborhood and community health centers, children and youth projects, primary care center, and HMOs.[33]

3. A national policy for children and families to ensure that families have a minimum income necessary to provide adequate food, shelter, and care for their children. A reasonable and feasible goal for such a program is that no child should be deprived of access to a family living standard of at least half of the median family income level (after tax) for a substantial period of his or her childhood, and this income should not fall below the government defined poverty level even for shorter periods. This goal can be met by: increased levels of activity in the economy to reduce unemployment and draw more family members into the labor force; public employment and training programs for youth, the low-skilled, and the hard-to-employ; and direct redistribution of income. To the extent that the goal is to be met through direct redistribution of income, substantial differences in income should be maintained to provide incentive and to ensure a fair sharing of the rewards of individual efforts for those in each stratum of income.[34]

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Chapter 7

THE MEDIA IN MICHIGAN: RACIAL IMAGES IN OUR MINDS

Gilbert A. Maddox

Communication is the essence of humanity. Through the process of communication, individuals bridge their islands of loneliness, and through communication societies are formed. The ability to communicate is essential, both to individual success and to group activity. We could scarcely exist without the communication media because they define our world. They describe who we are, what we value, what is important. They bring us the latest news, entertainment, sports, and religious programs. They are our escape. They lull us to sleep. They teach us about people and places that we will likely never visit. They bring us much of the world culture that enriches our lives by providing us with stories, music, and dance--exciting visual images and ideas.

Understanding the media is crucially important, because they have a profound influence on the shape of society. Information from the media shapes individual attitudes and public decisions. In a circular process, the media affect what people think and talk about, and are in turn influenced by what people are saying in their homes and in public.

This paper will examine current issues surrounding the media coverage of events occurring in urban communities in the State of Michigan and the nation. It will focus particularly upon the images of black Americans that the media have depicted, and will explore the profound impact that these images have upon the perceptions and cognitions of black and white consumers.

Blacks are all but invisible in positive television and film images. Even though there have been recent trends toward increased visibility of blacks, they continue to be grossly underrepresented in electronic media portrayals. For the most part, blacks continue to be stereotyped as they have been in the past, even though during the 1960s and 1970s there was public demand for greater media sensitivity. One of the groups providing leadership in those demands for more positive coverage was the Congressional Black Caucus. The Caucus forcefully articulated its scathing indictment of the communication media as early as 1972 when it stated in a position paper:

> The Congressional Black Caucus is convinced that the mass communication media is one of the major American industries directly responsible for the inability of Black and other disadvantaged people to improve their standard of living, enjoy equal protection of the law, and develop their full potential as individuals. If the mass media can tell you who you are, who you are not, what you are or what you can become, the media can control your ability to acquire food, clothing, housing, and jobs. . . . These experts at exposing the wrong-doers of our society use the same rhetorical skills to hide their own failures to adequately report on Black communities, and to bring Black talent into the field. These same skills are also used to cover up the fact that the advancement of Black professionals into the decision making areas of the communication field has lagged far behind that of Blacks in nearly every other major industry. The mass media has

> consistently failed to investigate its own bad practices with the same zest with which it has run investigations into every other human behavior.[1]

THE DEPICTION OF BLACKS IN THE MEDIA

The media tend to reflect and popularize the moods and attitudes of a society. Perhaps that is the key to understanding the way blacks have historically been depicted by the media during the past half-century. As the black movement gathered strength, and white racial attitudes grew somewhat more enlightened, media depiction of blacks improved. But that improvement has come quite recently, and scarcely anyone of good will would contend that there is not still a long way to go.

During the mid-70s, we began to see a significant number of television series that purported to depict black family life: "The Jeffersons," "Good Times," and "What's Happening." "Welcome Back, Kotter" depicts life of multi-ethnic minorities in a ghetto high school. "Diff'rent Strokes" depicts the antics of two black youths adopted by a white "father." Shows of this genre are situation comedies that, for the most part, distort and satirize black family life.

Are they a step forward in a thoughtful treatment of black life and issues? Do they represent a new social consciousness? Grayson concluded that the

> ...major characters appear as reincarnations of black buffoons of the fifties, caricatures of blacks as perceived by white producers and writers. . . Rather than provide a humanistic perspective of this minority's lifestyle and culture, these series often mock it.

> Comic dimensions are added to images of black families in turmoil. Hostile interactions are sweetened by timely audience laughter and hackneyed displays of affection at show end.[2]

Just exactly what are the demeaning and dangerous aspects of these depictions to both white and black viewing audiences? The following are some conclusions:

> Virtually all of the programs with blacks are situation comedies in which blacks are the butt of jokes. Whites have exaggerated portrayals also, but such portrayals are balanced by a variety of shows and formats in which they are seen in a positive fashion.
>
> Blacks are always powerless. They make no significant contributions to the society. They hold no responsible positions. They are somehow always dependent upon whites for support.
>
> There is almost always an absence of strong intelligent, black fathers. Viewers see stories in which the father is dead or has deserted. The few shows with positive dramatic stories and strong black male authority figures with loving nurturing families (James Earl Jones as the big city police chief in "Paris"· Louis Gossett, Jr. as the chief surgeon of a major hospital in "Lazarus Syndrome") are seldom given the promotional support to survive in the ratings race. It appears that white America is not ready to accept a positive, powerful black male authority figure as a series hero.
>
> In contrast to the positive male figure is the powerless "nigger" figure, such as Redd Foxx's "Sanford and Son." Sanford can best be described as "crafty, lazy, nasty-looking and nasty-sounding."[3] He steadfastly resists self-improvement, and his attitude toward the larger world recalls the tradition of humor in which the lowly outwitted the masters. Sanford is at best a scheming, crude, conniving, obnoxious weakling who wants to "get over" without working. He is known to feign heart trouble when asked to work, and to be willing to do anything to make a fast buck. He is disrespectful of women, puts down blacks, and is perfectly satisfied with his life in the ghetto.

> Much of the humor derived by black situation comedies is predicated upon putdowns and mutually insulting behavior. In "What's Happening," Dee, the domineering little sister, makes deprecating remarks about her brother, Roger, and his friends. J. J. constantly chides his sister, Thelma, about her stupidity and ugliness on "Good Times." George Jefferson spews forth venomous insults at his maid, Florence, and others as well, while Fred Sanford curses Aunt Esther, the Bible-toting, signifying sister-in-law who insists that he is a heathen. Grayson suggested that "An older, sophisticated viewer might question this world in which black females and males are constantly shown expressing hostility toward one another, but to the young, unsophisticated child viewer, this is life as it is in the real world."[4]

> One of the more dangerous stereotypic depictions in current shows is that of Gary Coleman as the precocious young star of "Diff'rent Strokes." He is a modern day version of Buckwheat in the legendary "The Little Rascals" series. His eyes bug out. . . He mugs it up. . . He is a domesticated black child, suitable for import from the black side of town to the land of opportunity, and he has dragged with him the baggage of the minstrel style.[5]

> George Jefferson, of the long-running series "The Jeffersons"--a spinoff from "All in the Family"--causes many observers considerable consternation. Rich describes him as "a splenetic little whip of a man, who bullies like a demented overseer, seldom speaks below a shriek and worships at the church of ostentation."[6] George is materialistic, arrogant, rude, hostile toward whites, constantly bickering with those around him, and teaches viewers his pompous value system--that to make it in this world you must be cold, self-centered, crude, and money-hungry.

Racism is the culprit in the racial conditioning that clouds the perceptions of whites and leads to the negative entertainment depictions of minorities. The next section will examine the pervasive insidiousness of this American "illness."

ROLE OF TELEVISION IN RACIAL CONDITIONING

Citron studied the crippling effect that the mass media have in reinforcing the racist orientation of whites. He argued that although whites are beginning to understand the plight of blacks in this country, they know little about the effect that cultural forces have upon the development of self-concept. Citron described the role that TV plays in this negative conditioning.

> White children, watching TV, are likely to feel, just as many adults, that Blacks are apt to appear in connection with some type of violence. Mass media, especially the pictorial content of the media, emphasize tensions, conflict and the violent aspect of the interaction of Blacks and whites in the contemporary scene. Further, the media are more likely to catch and identify as conflict and violence those actions in which Blacks attempt to oppose or change the system than they are to catch and reflect the repressive actions of the dominant group to maintain the system. This is because white dominance is pervasive, taken for granted, with low visibility, built into the normal flow of the institutional bureaucratic system, therefore, usually accomplished with nonviolence, backed, however, with great institutional power and force; while Black objection, insistence and militancy are new, identifiable, visible, abnormal, shocking, and fearful, thus newsworthy.[7]

Hurwitz and Snook, in tracing the history of racism in this country, placed the blame on the communication media for the perpetuation of the myth of white superiority and black inferiority. They also blame the media for white society's rationalization of its cruel treatment, its justification of its actions, and its attempts to hide its crime. They stated:

> The media that produced the tools of communication: textbooks, movies, radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, etc., realized that there could not be an honest representation of either the qualities of the black man, his historical and cultural background, or the very real contributions he was making to the growth of the American

> society. Therefore, there was systematic exclusion of all references that could have been made to the dignity and contributions of black people. Would even a group of people, white Americans who had spent the last few hundred years feeding on racist information and attitudes, be tolerant of the systematic exploitation and subjugation of blacks if they knew that blacks were human and worthwhile? Doubting it, the white power structure moved to perpetuate the myth of white superiority.[8]

IMPACT OF ENTERTAINMENT PROGRAMMING ON YOUTH

Thoughtful social observers are disturbed by the depictions of blacks in the the news--both press and electronic media--because these depictions impact negatively upon the day-to-day activities of our communities. Moreover, more and more social scientists are becoming aware of the unique impact of entertainment programming in depicting harmful images to the community. Because these images are pragmatic presentations that convey powerful emotional impressions at a time when the average viewer has relaxed his or her normal threshold of cognitive scrutiny, such images may indeed be powerful agents for shaping attitudes and cognitions. When we realize also the increasing number of hours that the dramas and situation comedies are viewed--more than 7 hours for the average family each day--it is fair to conclude that viewers are being profoundly impressed.

Television has become the single most important source of news for Americans (70 percent use it as their major news source), as well as the primary entertainment and leisure time activity. Many social scientists believe that the electronic media have passed the school and church in terms of socializing effect. These critics

have expressed concern about the impact of the many hours of viewing, usually unmonitored. Television has the potential to affect young people in some of the following ways:

- -The aggressive violent behaviors that are exhibited contribute to their knowledge of crime.
- -Violence is depicted as a desirable means of solving problems.
- -The impression is given that complex problems can be solved in a simplistic fashion.
- -Human sexuality is presented in an exploitive way.
- -Happiness is shown as being achieved through consumption of things.
- -Women, men, and racial groups are stereotyped, seriously coloring youths' image of themselves and others.

Many observers are concerned about TV's impact on the physical development of children. They believe that because of "kidvid's" promotion of sugarcoated cereals, candy, and chewing gum, we are creating a nation of "sugar junkies." They contend that TV hooks children on poor eating habits long before they develop the mental defenses to resist. Among other comments on the potential negative effects of excessive television viewing by children are the following:

- -TV can take away the child's ability to form pictures in his mind; some children cannot understand a simple story without visual illustrations.
- -TV instills an attitude of spectatorship--a withdrawal from direct involvement in real life experiences.
- -Children are conditioned to see all problems resolved in 30 or 60 minutes--they exhibit a low tolerance for the normal frustrations of the learning process.
- -Children are turned off by any activity that promises less than instant gratification.
- -Teachers are often forced into the role of entertainer in order to hold the student's attention.

Another cause for concern is that children are missing out in social development because they are neglecting normal activities that assist in the maturation of the developing human organism. Some child development specialists are concerned that watching TV for as much as 20-54 hours a week for preschool children may adversely affect child development in these areas:[9]

- -language arts
- -imaginative creativity
- -perception of reality
- -ability to form healthy human relationships
- -ability to work out basic family relationships
- -ability to achieve liberation from family dependency
- -the acquiring of fundamental skills in communication--reading, writing, and oral expression
- -need for intellectual stimulation
- -need for fantasy

Recognizing the impact that television can have upon the learning experience, greater efforts must be made to counteract this potentially negative social conditioning by helping to make teachers, parents, and others in the school community more aware of the dangers.

BLACK CONTROL

"Too long have others spoken for us. We want to speak for ourselves."[10]

That statement, which appeared more than one hundred years ago in the first editorial of the first Negro newspaper, Freedom's Journal, is being heard even more emphatically today. Those who are saying it--primarily black stars, producers, and writers--are being joined by many white observers of the media in their conclusion that the only way for television to project an honest image of black life in all its dimensions

is for blacks to create and control their own programs.

Pluria Marshall, head of the National Black Media Coalition, offers some practical suggestions that his organization is using to effect change in program content. He suggests a multifaceted attack that includes the following strategies.[11]

1. Focus attention on agencies, many of which are notoriously racist, to effect changes in programming. The television industry gets much of its advice from advertising agencies.

2. Put pressure on advertisers. Selective boycotting of certain products could pressure advertisers to support programs written and produced by black people-programs that the networks might not accept.

3. Focus attention on the networks themselves by encouraging the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to inquire into network hiring practices. Letters must be written in support of such an inquiry, as well as letters encouraging the FCC to hold networks accountable for equity in hiring at all levels.

4. Increase the number of black general managers and station owners. Such owners will increase access for other blacks and will influence the content of programming.

5. Be aware of efforts to deregulate television. "Deregulation works against positive representation of black people on the airways." Blacks seldom received proper consideration until there was special regulation.

6. Acquire cable, low-power TV, and direct broadcast satellite channels. The new technologies offer another avenue of change in television. Money must be invested in programming, because "it will be those who provide the programming, rather than those who own the station, who will control the image of Black people on television."

7. Seek the support of local communities and organizations like the National Black Media Coalition, when media employees attempt to effect change.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PRINT MEDIA

Without a fair, honest press, people would have no way of judging the conduct of their government and of other major institutions whose actions and decisions impact upon the lives of all citizens.

The press has tremendous power because of the public's obsession with the news of what is occurring around them. The press has the power to sway public opinion, to elect public officials, to influence governmental action, to judge the character of citizens, and to change lives.

An examination of the news media can begin with the historic date July 22, 1967, two days after the rebellion in the City of Detroit. This date was a milestone in the history of America. It was the date that President Lyndon Johnson created the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, the so-called "Kerner Commission." The task of this commission was to examine the civil disorders that occurred in our cities to determine their causes and to recommend steps to prevent them. The Kerner Commission reported that:[12]

> ...the communications media, ironically, have failed to communicate.
>
> They have not communicated to the majority of their audience--which is white--a sense of the degradation, misery and hopelessness of living in the ghetto. They have not communicated to whites a feeling for the difficulties and frustrations of being a Negro in the United States. They have not shown understanding or appreciation of--and thus have not communicated--a sense of Negro culture, thought, or history.
>
> Equally important, most newspaper articles and most television programming ignore the fact that an appreciable part of their audience is black. The world that television

> and newspapers offer to their black audience is almost totally white, in both appearance and attitude.
>
> Along with the country as a whole, the press has too long basked in a white world, looking out of it, if at all, with white men's eyes and a white perspective.
>
> The absence of Negro faces and activities from the media has had an effect on white audiences as well as black. If what the white American reads in the newspapers or sees on television conditions his expectation of what is ordinary and normal in the larger society, he will neither understand nor accept the black American. By failing to portray the Negro as a matter of routine and in the context of the total society, the news media have, we believe, contributed to the black-white schism in this country.

By accusing the media of "white racism" the Kerner Commission was simply extending a fundamental criticism black Americans had been making for years. Examples of racism in the media would include: the projection of a distorted, superficial view of black life, opinion, and leadership; and the systematic exclusion of blacks from employment in decision making positions, from control of programs directed to the black community, from a voice in the selection and presentation of news and entertainment, and from the opportunity to express opinions contrary to white presupposition.

POST KERNER REPORT COVERAGE

It has been more than 15 years since the Kerner Commission issued its monumental report on the causes of the civil disorders and recommended specific changes. What has happened during that time? Has there been progress? Has employment of minority persons improved? What has been their treatment? Has news coverage been more sensitive and illuminating?

These questions were asked at a conference conducted by The University of Michigan's Department of Journalism in April 1977. The conference, titled Kerner: Plus 10, brought together white editors, academicians, and black journalists. Most of the participants came from the State of Michigan, particularly from the City of Detroit. Robert C. Maynard, now the publisher of the Oakland Press, then an editorial board member of the Washington Post, made these keynote observations:[13]

As to blacks in the profession:

> I think we could still say that the number of nonwhite reporters remains dismal and no one to my knowledge has attempted to count the number of nonwhites writing editorials, running city desks, running foreign bureaus, or even choosing the pictures for page one.

Is there a sense of black culture, thought, or history?

> There is not much to read of black history and culture in the average American newspaper--perhaps a big splash on the Sunday before Negro History Week.
>
> Whites have no notion, on the one hand, of what it is like to live in today's inner city, because our newspapers do so little to bring that fact alive. On the other hand, the positive aspects of Black American history and culture are obscured for much the same reasons--because in all too many instances there is no black in a position to help shape a product so that it reflects accurately all the disparate elements that make up our society.

In discussion that ensued the following issues were addressed:

What has been the treatment of minority journalists?

> There has been a high turnover of minority journalists. Most have left journalism entirely--out of a sense of frustration because of hostile encounters with editors over coverage and assignments.
>
> There has been a lack of progress into middle management policymaking jobs. This blocked progress has led

to disillusionment.

Minority journalists have been pushed out.

There is not the same urgency to hire blacks as previously.

Minority training programs have been curtailed or eliminated.

What were the impressions of black reporters concerning their treatment?

Reporters indicated the following:

They received little help from the news desk.

They encountered racial insensitivity and entrenched institutional racism.

Little attention was paid to black stories. There was little staff brainstorming about black issues.

They felt they were black agents for white editors, used as pacification personalities in inner city communities.

They were asked to cover white stories; little attention was given to comparable black stories.

They saw a limit to advancement and there was unrest among senior black journalists.

There was little interest in meeting the charges of the Kerner Commission.

They encountered extreme conservatism in stories about black culture--stories concerning the process of the community, not merely the crisis of the community.

The specialization in minority/urban affairs was waning; things were moving in a different direction. There was little appreciation of the minority perspective.

They had little influence on stories; there were few blacks in management or in any decision making positions.

What were the observations of white editors in attendance?

There ought to be larger numbers of black journalists. We are not doing all that we should be doing.

Few black applicants apply for positions.

> Few student applicants can write a decent sentence or news story. Journalism schools are cranking out a large number of poor candidates.
>
> There is a need for more staff willing to go into the community in search of stories.
>
> There is limited space and airtime for in-depth, non-headline type news stories.
>
> Papers must serve two or three different, often competing, readerships: inner-city, suburban, and out-of-state. For these audiences, the amount of coverage and kind of stories are in conflict.

Another comprehensive report on the progress or lack of progress in our nation's newsrooms was a study published in 1979 in the Columbia Journalism Review. In "The Minority Struggle for a Place in the Newsroom," an examination was made of the progress of minority journalists since the perplexing days of the sixties. The study concluded:[14]

> There has been significant progress in integrating the newspaper business, but it has been "halting, uneven, and far too modest to celebrate." Recent years unfortunately have seen even the modest accomplishments deteriorate. There are approximately 1,700 minority newspaper journalists today, which is about 4% of all professionals in the business. The numbers of journalism students and teaching professionals increased initially, but have fallen downward in recent years.
>
> According to a survey of the Detroit Chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, 29 white-owned media outlets in Detroit have 1,082 employees, and just 137 of them, or 12.6 percent, are black (11.9 percent at the Free Press, 6.3 percent at the News.) This is in a city that is more than 65 percent black and a six-county area that is about 22 percent black.[15]

The most critical overall assessment of the fall from public grace by the press was made by Time Magazine.[16] Cited were the findings of the National Opinion Research Center that although in 1976, 29 percent of the public had "a great deal of confidence in

the press," by 1983 that level of confidence had fallen to a low of 13.7 percent. Under the following main headings, Time catalogued the major difficulties that people appear to have with the press:

Inaccuracy. Included would be errors of fact and stories that are embellished, invented, or distorted to support the point of view of the reporter or newspaper. Typical inaccuracies include the willful reshaping of quotes and the concoction of anonymous "sources" to support a position. Personal values can show up in the reporting, and the political leanings of the reporter/newspaper are often evident in the selection and treatment of stories.

Frequently, inaccuracies appear to be caused by overagressive reporting and inadequate checking. At other times, errors are the result of reporters lacking the facts and the background to understand and interpret the story.

Reliance upon leaks or alleged leaks. A corollary to inaccuracy in reporting is reliance upon unnamed sources for information about a story. Often the source does not exist, and reporters are known to have fabricated stories willfully. Another disturbing practice is the reliance of the press upon police and prosecutors for news. The reporters supply the criminal justice system publicity in exchange for information.

Other pernicious practices, as identified by Time, that the press has been known to use in its preoccupation with "investigative"

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reporting, include tactics such as breaking and entering, electronic bugging, impersonation, bribes, and entrapment in order to report a story.

Arrogance. Kansas City Ombudsman Donald Jones, who reads hundreds of complaints annually, sees "reporters and editors trying to set themselves up as a privileged class." They appear to be "self-righteous," brushing aside most criticism as the uninformed carping of cranks and idealogues. Most attempt to justify their behavior on the basis of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and the public's "right to know."

Many reporters are concerned only with enhancing and advancing their own careers, and they lack loyalty and sensitivity to the communities they serve. In pursuit of their career goals, they are often willing to use explosive events as opportunities for their own personal glory and financial gain.[17]

Newpapers and TV-radio are in the business of selling, and good deeds do not sell newspapers, enlarge viewership, or increase listeners. What does sell is gloom and fear and crime and deceit. There is a glorification of the criminal and the bizarre. In the City of Detroit, with a long history of racial alienation, the press advertently or inadvertently highlights coverage of events which reflect positively on the suburban communities and negatively on the core city. Further, there is an intense circulation battle in the Metropolitan Detroit community between the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press. The most desired subscribers live in the suburbs, and they represent the economic demographics which advertisers desire. It stands to

reason that inner city residents are neglected by metro dailies, which emphasize suburban news at the expense of central city news. This contention is borne out by a number of studies in communities across the country.[18]

The press appears particularly zealous in its pursuit of negative information about high placed officials,and press representatives are often rude and hostile at news conferences of such officials. These leaders suggest that the press merely reflects the attitudes of the larger society. Many white citizens have attempted to obstruct a transfer of political power to the black leadership that now controls many of our major urban enclaves.

This has been particularly true in the City of Detroit where Mayor Coleman Alexander Young, elected in 1974, has borne the brunt of media "overkill," sometimes vicious, biased, and blatantly inflammatory media coverage. Young has been the subject of uncomplimentary editorials and cartoons relative to his reorganization of the city under a new "strong mayor" charter, to his relationship with the Detroit City Council, to his quest for passage of affirmative action programs (particularly in the police and fire departments), and to his selection of women and minorities to head city departments. Feature stories published recently have suggested that fear, crime, and the Mayor's personal arrogance were driving business interests out of the downtown sector, contributing to racial division and threatening harmonious living in the ethnic neighborhoods of the city.

Certainly the press has a right and an obligation to monitor the behavior and administrative practices of local and national

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governments. These activities are proper conduct of the press. It is conceivable, however, that the press can be overzealous in carrying out its perceived duties. In the process, it may injure the reputations of innocent public servants and severely tarnish the public's faith in many of its most cherished institutions, such as the courts and the jury system. This seems to be the case for all of Detroit's papers and television stations in their coverage of two highly publicized court trials--Magnum and Vista.

Many media watchers believe that these two cases, which generated more coverage than any in the history of Detroit journalism, saw numerous violations of journalistic and legal ethics in the pre-trial, trial, and post-trial behavior of press representatives and government prosecutors. All along, blacks have charged that the government was out to "get" Mayor Young because of his tremendous influence and growing prestige. Many people concur with Young when he calls the Magnum and Vista trials racially motivated attempts to remove him from office.

In the aftermath of the Vista trial, serious concerns have been raised about the press reports concerning the conduct of jurors in the case. The question of a fair trial for Vista defendants who will be retried is also a matter of concern.

In the first instance, there were published reports of interviews by most of the jurors in the case, with the focus of attention falling upon one juror who voted against conviction on most of the counts because of his belief that the federal government did not prove the guilt of the defendants to his satisfaction. The press created

the impression that this lone holdout did something wrong by voting his conscience. Mayor Coleman Young, when asked to comment upon this juror's conduct, stated:[19]

> Here's a man who pursued his duty as a juror. I never heard of the audacity of someone questioning someone's morality, questioning their honesty, and even their ancestry for doing what you're supposed to do on a jury.

Mayor Young was joined in his criticism of press reports by leaders of the NAACP, the Urban League, and the Detroit Association of Black Organizations. Their statement called newspaper and TV coverage of the jury vote in the Vista trial[20] "part of a continuous effort to spotlight racial differences and infer impropriety in an independent action taken by a black person." The Mayor observed that "overdiscussion of the Vista trial in the Detroit news media has made it impossible for defendants to get a fair retrial on charges that deadlocked the first jury."

The American news and entertainment media must come to grips with the fundamental contradiction of images in American society, a contradiction pointed out graphically by Dr. James Comer:[21]

> The treatment of Black Americans historically and currently reflects the image that the majority of Americans hold about themselves. We like to see ourselves as Christians, as people living in a democratic society, living by the rules of law and justice and fairness. That is an important image that America would like to maintain. . . Many Americans have rationalized and denied the fact that there have been wrongdoings in the society, that the wrongdoing, the abuse, and the exclusion of Blacks from the political and economic mainstream represent immoral conduct, illegal conduct and conduct unbecoming to Americans. Instead, the message that too often has been sent about Blacks through the media is that they are responsible for these inequities -- Blacks are unworthy, they are not able and do not desire to share

in the mainstream activities of the society. This message, pointed and maintained by the media, has permitted the political, economic, educational and social exploitation of Blacks, and has resulted in underdevelopment in the black community in these areas.

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF NEWS COVERAGE

We would be remiss in our responsibility if we pointed out only the ills, the pathologies existing in news coverage. The media are, as James Comer says, "a two-edged sword" that cuts both ways--good and bad. At the same time that we criticize, we must also applaud the media for the significant role they played in depicting the saga of the civil rights movement, for explaining the pathologies of our cities during the 60s and 70s riots and rebellions, and finally for bringing at least some blacks and other minorities into the mainstream of American journalism at both the national and local levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS AND POLICIES FOR PRINT AND BROADCAST INDUSTRIES IN THE STATE OF MICHIGAN

The following recommendations present specific steps to make the media more responsive to the needs of minority persons and communities in the State of Michigan. The writer was a major architect of the recommendations.

These recommendations are the result of extended deliberations by Detroit area citizens and community organizations, including: Women's Conference of Concerns (WCC), FOCUS HOPE, the Detroit Public Schools' "Impact of Mass Media on Urban Life" report, the study on black families and television at The University of Michigan, 1982, and the Kerner Plus 10 Conference Report of 1977.

These proposals are directed to all broadcast and leading print media, particularly in the Detroit metropolitan area, the sixth largest market of the United States. These media organizations collectively exert a profound influence on the minds and hearts of all over nine million residents of the State of Michigan.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

1. Media should establish goals and timetables for equality in all levels of employment. The yardstick should be the percentage of blacks in the area of dominant influence (26 percent in the metropolitan Detroit area).

2. Media management should investigate carefully the reasons for any high turnover rates among blacks and take immediate steps to correct the problems.

3. TV stations should hire black and Latino weekday anchorpersons and street reporters as a top priority. Radio stations should assign blacks and Latinos to investigative reporting assignments as a top priority.

4. Stations should be required to follow these employment practices:

   -Name specific groups to receive job information.
   -Inform such groups of each job that is open.
   -Advertise jobs in the black press.
   -Conduct recruitment through black colleges and local universities, the NAB Employment Clearinghouse, and several local sources as well, e.g., the local chapter of the National Black Media Coalition.

5. Media should make available to minorities and women on their staffs appropriate tuition reimbursements.

6. Managers and professionals employed at the stations should participate in a program of sensitivity training designed to increase understanding of the community's diverse cultural, racial, and ethnic richness.

News and Programming

1. Each company should set aside a substantial budget for public affairs programming, sufficient to provide for adequate facilities, a qualified crew, promotion,

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adequate in-house studio time, and resources to permit filming or taping outside the stations.

2. Each TV station should produce on at least a weekly basis a program designed to meet the educational, cultural, and socialization needs of children and parents.

Community Affairs

1. The community affairs function should be "interdisciplinary"--shared among all departments. The director should interface with each department and oversee a budget for special programs, promotions, and public service.

Management Development

1. Each company should take the necessary steps to place black, Latino, and other minority persons with strong community ties on its corporate board.

Minority Ownership

1. Each company should plan to make a strong, substantive commitment to furthering the cause of black and minority television and radio station ownership. Participation in this effort could take any of the following forms:

   -making available grants or seed money
   -making available a line of low-interest credit
   -helping groups acquire credit
   -providing technical or other assistance to a group or groups through the detailing of station personnel for a designated period of time ("babysitting" a deal)

Use of Black Business

Each station should determine which community minority firms, including banks and insurance companies, produce goods or services it could use. Every effort should be made to use such goods or services.

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Chapter 8

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS: RACIAL DISPARITIES PERSIST IN MICHIGAN

Joe T. Darden

This report on the State of Black Michigan: 1984 has assessed the extent of racial inequality in a northern industrial state. Based on the most recent data available, the report examined the status of blacks compared to whites. Among the social and economic indicators considered were unemployment and labor force participation rates, occupational structure, income and poverty, life expectancy and infant mortality, educational attainment, family composition, and crime and punishment. Black political participation and racial inequality in the media were also addressed.

This final chapter highlights each social and economic indicator within the context of racial inequality. The conclusion is that the social and economic gap between blacks and whites in Michigan is widespread and persistent.

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN UNEMPLOYMENT

Despite the recent controversy over whether the significance of race has declined as a factor affecting the chances for occupational advancement of blacks (Wilson, 1978), race is still a powerful variable

in determining who does, and who does not become employed. In economic good times and economic hard times, the unemployment rate of blacks in the United States has remained, on the average, twice the rate of whites in the years since racial data on unemployment became available in 1948 (Darden, 1983: 94).

Between 1967 and 1982, the unemployment rate for nonwhites in Michigan has been at the double digit level for every year except 1968 and 1969. Thus, the rate for nonwhites has continued to be two to three times higher than the rate for whites. Furthermore, in 1982, the black unemployment rate in Michigan reached 33 percent, exceeding the rate for the nation as a whole during the Great Depression.

The unemployment rate for Michigan blacks aged 16-19 was even more deplorable. In 1981, for example, black teenagers had an unemployment rate of 63.1 percent--i.e., 2.8 times the rate for white teenagers. The average unemployment rate for all Michigan blacks was 2.5 times the rate for whites.

Unemployment rates vary by occupational category. In 1978, nonwhite sales workers experienced the highest unemployment rate (31.2 percent) of all the major occupational categories. White sales workers, on the other hand, experienced an unemployment rate of only 3.8 percent, a difference of 27.4 percentage points. The lowest black unemployment rate (1.0 percent) was found among managers and officials. This was the only occupational category where the black unemployment rate was lower than that for whites. In general, the unemployment gap between blacks and whites in Michigan widened in each major occupational

category between 1975 and 1978 (Table 1).

Table 1

The Nonwhite/White Unemployment Gap
State of Michigan, 1975 and 1978

Occupational Categories	Nonwhite/White Unemployment Ratios*	
	1975	1978
White Collar	2.0	3.1
Blue Collar	1.5	1.7
Service Workers	1.4	2.0
All Occupations	1.8	2.4

Source: Computed by the author from data obtained from Michigan Employment Security Commission. Minorities in Michigan's Work Force. Detroit: A Report of the Commission, May, 1980: 22.

*Note: The unemployment ratios were computed by dividing the nonwhite unemployment rate by the white unemployment rate. The results indicate that in 1978, for example, the nonwhite unemployment rate for white collar workers was 3.1 times the white rate.

The black/white unemployment gap also varied from city to city. The widest black/white unemployment gap was found in Benton Harbor in 1980. The smallest difference in the rates of unemployment between blacks and whites existed in Lansing and Muskegon (Table 2).

Table 2

The Nonwhite/White Unemployment Ratios
in Eight Michigan Cities in 1980

Cities	Rank	Unemployment Ratios*
Benton Harbor	1	3.3
Grand Rapids	2	3.0
Ann Arbor	3	2.5
Detroit	4	2.3
Battle Creek	5	1.9
Flint	5	1.9
Lansing	6	1.8
Muskegon	6	1.8

Source: Computed by the author from data obtained from Michigan Employment Security Commission. Minorities in Michigan's Work Force. Detroit: A Report of the Commission, May, 1980: 22.

*Note: The unemployment ratios were computed by dividing the nonwhite unemployment rate by the white unemployment rate. The results indicate that in Benton Harbor, for example, the black unemployment rate was 3.3 times the white rate in 1980.

The black unemployment rate was 28.1 percent in Benton Harbor and 13.8 percent in Lansing in 1980. Blacks in Muskegon had an unemployment rate of 19.6 percent. Such high levels of black unemployment have discouraged many black men and women from even looking for work. The state's labor force participation rates--i.e., the percentages of

working age people actually employed--are figures that reveal even more clearly the economic plight of blacks in Michigan.

RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES

Black males left the labor force at much higher rates than white males between 1970 and 1981. Michigan's nonwhite (consisting mostly of blacks) male labor force participation rate fell 14.8 percent from 1970 to 1981. On the other hand, the white male labor force participation rate fell only 3.2 percent. Furthermore, nonwhite females and white females have been moving in opposite directions. Between 1970 and 1981, the Michigan nonwhite female labor force participation rate fell 6.0 percent, while the white female labor force participation rate increased 21.6 percent. At a time when more black women were leaving the labor force, more white women were entering (Table 3).

Table 3

Changes in Labor Force Participation Rates, 1970 and 1981, by Race and Sex, State of Michigan

Year	Nonwhite Males	White Males	Nonwhite Females	White Females
1970	83.5%	82.8%	51.5%	41.1%
1981	71.1	80.1	48.4	50.1
Percentage Point Change	-12.4	-2.7	-3.1	+9.0
Percent Change	-14.8	-3.2	-6.0	+21.8

Source: Computed by the author from data obtained from Bureau of Business Research. Wayne State University. Michigan Statistical Abstracts. 1981, 1982-83, pp. 139-140.

RACIAL INEQUALITY IN THE OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE

Examination of eight cities in Michigan clearly revealed that racial inequality existed in the distribution of jobs. Black workers were underrepresented in each of the eight cities in high-paying, high-status jobs, such as managerial and professional specialty occupations, and in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations. Blacks were also underrepresented in such skilled trades as precision production, craft, and repair occupations.

In other words, blacks are still highly concentrated in the lowest-skilled and lowest-paying occupations such as service, operations, fabrications, and laborers. These jobs often involve substandard wages, great instability, uncertainty of tenure, extremely low status in the eyes of both employer and employee, little or no chance for meaningful advancement, and unpleasant or exhausting duties. Clearly, the distribution of jobs is not equal.

To determine the extent of the racial inequality in the occupational structure, indexes of dissimilarity (Darden and Tabachneck, 1980) were computed for each of the Michigan cities. The indexes assessed the percent of the employed black population in a given occupation compared to the percent of the employed white population in the same occupation. In the absence of past and/or present discrimination, one would expect little or no racial difference in the percentages employed in each occupation. In reality, the derived values, which range from 0 to 100, indicate the percentages of either race that would have to

change occupations to make the percentages equal.*

The mean index of dissimilarity for the eight cities in 1980 was 19.6 percent. Cities above the mean--i.e., those with the greatest amount of racial inequality in the occupational structure--consisted of Muskegon (23.9 percent), Benton Harbor (23.5 percent), Grand Rapids (22.8 percent), and Flint (22.3 percent). The city with the least amount of racial inequality in the occupational structure was Lansing (10.8 percent). Other cities with indexes below the mean were Detroit (17.3 percent), Ann Arbor (17.8 percent), and Battle Creek (18.5 percent) (Table 4).

Table 4

Differences in Percentages, by Occupational Categories, of Blacks and Whites Employed in Eight Michigan Cities, 1980

Occupations	Ann Arbor	Battle Creek	Benton Harbor	Detroit	Flint	Grand Rapids	Lansing	Muskegon	Mean
	← Differences in Percentages →								
Managerial and Professional Specialty Occupations	-10.5%	- 6.8%	- 6.7%	- 8.3%	- 6.8%	- 7.0%	- 4.0%	- 7.6%	- 7.2%
Technical, Sales, and Administrative Support Occupations	- 3.0	- 3.7	- 7.8	- 3.0	- 8.6	- 9.6	- 1.1	- 7.4	- 5.5
Service	+ 9.0	+12.0	+13.2	+ 7.8	+ 5.3	+ 7.7	+ 3.5	+ 9.0	+ 8.4
Farm, Forestry, and Fishing Occupations	- 1.3	- 1.6	- 1.7	- 0.3	- 0.8	- 1.4	- 2.0	- 1.5	- 1.3
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair Occupations	- 3.3	- 6.5	- 7.3	- 5.7	- 6.0	- 4.7	- 4.0	- 5.1	- 5.3
Operations, Fabrications, and Laborers	+ 8.5	+ 6.5	+10.3	+ 9.5	+17.0	+15.1	+ 7.3	+14.9	+11.1
Index of Dissimilarity*	17.8	18.5	23.5	17.3	22.3	22.8	10.8	23.9	19.6

Source: Computed by the author from data obtained from Chapter 3, Table 4.

* The formula for computing the index of dissimilarity can be found in Joe T. Darden and Arthur A. Tabachneck, "Algorithm 8: Graphic and Mathematical Descriptions of Inequality, Dissimilarity, Segregation, or Concentration," Environment and Planning A. Vol. 12, 1980, p. 228.

Note: - = Blacks are underrepresented
+ = Blacks are overrepresented

*The formula for the index of dissimilarity can be found in Joe T. Darden and Arthur A. Tabachneck, "Algorithm 8: Graphic and Mathematical Descriptions of Inequality, Dissimilarity, Segregation, or Concentration," Environment and Planning A, Vol. 12, p. 228.

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The degree of racial inequality in the occupational structures of Muskegon, Benton Harbor, Grand Rapids, and Flint was approximately twice that of Lansing. There is less difference in Lansing in the representation of blacks and whites in managerial and professional speciality occupations, as well as in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations. This may be related to the fact that Lansing is the capital of Michigan with a large number of governmental jobs where civil service rules often apply. There is also less difference in Lansing between the representation of blacks and whites in service occupations and in operations, fabrications, and laborer occupations.

In summary, these indexes reflect the fact that as of 1980, black occupational distribution in selected cities of Michigan did not approximate equality with the white distribution. The differences are the consequences of racial discrimination (past and present) and differences in educational achievement, with the latter being related to social and economic discrimination (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1969: 241). It appears that occupational discrimination against blacks has been least in Lansing and greatest in Muskegon. As racial discrimination declines in all Michigan cities, racial disparities in the occupational distribution of blacks and whites should also decline.

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN FAMILY INCOME

Another indicator of social and economic status is income. In 1980, the median family income of whites in Michigan was $24,167 compared to $15,860 for blacks, a difference of $8,307.

Black and white family incomes in Michigan were unevenly distriuted in 1980, with an index of dissimilarity of 22.9 percent. Blacks were disproportionately represented at the extreme low end--i.e., below the $5,000 range, whereas whites were disproportionately represented at the $50,000 and above income range (Table 5).

Table 5

Black/White Disparities in Family Income
State of Michigan, 1980

Income Ranges	Percent Distribution Black	White	Difference
Less than $5,000	4.3%	16.2%	11.9%
$5,000 to 7,499	4.5	10.6	6.1
7,500 to 9,999	5.1	7.8	2.7
10,000 to 14,999	11.0	13.2	2.2
15,000 to 19,999	12.9	12.5	0.4
20,000 to 24,999	14.6	11.1	3.5
25,000 to 34,999	23.5	15.2	8.3
35,000 to 49,999	15.9	10.2	5.7
50,000 or More	8.3	3.2	5.1

Index of Dissimilarity 22.9%

Source: Computed by the author from data obtained from U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census, Michigan Census of Population: 1980. General Social and Economic Characteristics, PC 80-1 C24. Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office.

The least difference in the representation of black and white family incomes occurred at the $15,000 to $19,999 income range, where black and white families were virtually equal. About 177,408 white families were in this income category compared to 34,252 black families. Based on the total white and black families in Michigan, these figures represent 12.9 percent of all white families and 12.5 percent of all black families in Michigan.

Black median income varies by urbanized areas in Michigan. The highest median incomes in 1980 were received by black households in Flint ($17,858), Lansing ($15,737), and Ann Arbor ($15,621). The lowest median incomes were received by black households in Muskegon-Muskegon Heights ($10,998), Benton Harbor ($9,469), and Port Huron ($8,364).

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN WEALTH AND POVERTY

Relative to whites, blacks do not have much wealth. The wealth that blacks do have is largely in home ownership and church property, neither of which generates much employment, economic power, or property income. In the area where employment and economic power are generated--i.e., business development--little black progress is occurring. In fact, black-owned firms with paid employees declined between 1969 and 1977 by 20 percent.

On the other hand, poverty has increased faster among blacks than among whites in Michigan. Between 1969 and 1979, the white poverty rate increased from 5.7 to 6.2 or by 8.7 percent while the black rate increased from 20.6 to 24.3 or by 18 percent--i.e., more than twice the

rate for whites. However, poverty declined for both black and white elderly persons between 1970 and 1980.

Poverty, like median income, varied by urbanized area. The highest poverty areas in 1980 were found in Benton Harbor (37 percent below the poverty level), Port Huron (28.2 percent) and Muskegon-Muskegon Heights (28.1 percent). A smaller percentage of black households were in poverty in Ann Arbor (17.2 percent), Jackson (18.4 percent), and Lansing (19.1 percent). As a result, public service needs were also highest in Benton Harbor and Muskegon-Muskegon Heights. Public service needs were least in Ann Arbor and Lansing. A lack of public services may lead to a shorter life expectancy and a higher infant mortality rate.

RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN LIFE EXPECTANCY AND INFANT MORTALITY

There is a strong relationship between the social and economic status of a population and that population's life expectancy and rate of infant mortality. Nonwhites in Michigan have a shorter life expectancy than whites. Furthermore, for males, no progress toward reducing the racial difference gap has occurred since 1950. The life expectancy for nonwhite males in 1950 was 60.4 years compared to 66.2 years for white males, a difference of 5.8 years. By 1981 the life expectancy for nonwhite males increased to 65.8 years compared to 71 years for white males. Thus, the racial difference gap declined only slightly to 5.2 years.

On the other hand, the racial difference gap between nonwhite and white females declined more than 50 percent over a thirty-one year period. In 1950, the life expectancy of nonwhite females was 63.9 years compared

to 71.9 years for white females, a difference of 8.5 years. By 1980, the life expectancy of nonwhite females has increased to 73.4 years compared to 77.5 years for white females, a difference of 4.1 years. Thus, improvement in life expectancy for nonwhite females has been occurring faster than that of white females.

Unlike life expectancy, the racial difference gap in infant mortality widened between 1950 and 1981. In 1950, the nonwhite infant mortality rate was 35.6 per 1,000 live births compared to 25.4 for whites, a difference of 10.2 deaths. By 1981, the nonwhite infant mortality rate had dropped to 25.6 per 1,000, but the white rate dropped to 10.9, a racial difference of 14.5 deaths. Although improvements in reducing infant deaths in Michigan occurred among both nonwhites and whites, the improvements were greater for whites, resulting in a greater amount of racial inequality in infant deaths in Michigan.

RACIAL DISPARITIES IN EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Although the gap between the percentages of whites and nonwhites completing high school in Michigan has been slowly narrowing since 1960, the gap between the percentages of whites and nonwhites completing college in 1960 was 4.4 percentage points. By 1980, the difference gap had widened to 7.3 percentage points.

Thus, two interpretations must be given to the question of black educational progress in Michigan. At the secondary level, a small amount of black progress has been made since 1960. At the college level, however, no progress has been made in narrowing the gap. Instead, the situation has worsened since 1960.

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RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN FAMILY COMPOSITION

Black and white families in Michigan are becoming more dissimilar. When black and white families were compared in 1970, the index of dissimilarity was 18.2 percent. However, by 1980, the index of dissimilarity between black and white families had increased to 31.1 percent (Table 6).

Table 6

Racial Differences in Family Composition
State of Michigan, 1970 and 1980

	1970			1980		
Family Types	%White	%Black	Difference	%White	%Black	Difference
Married-Couple Families	89.1	70.0	19.1	86.0	53.4	32.6
Female-Headed Families	25.4	8.1	17.3	11.1	40.8	29.7
			36.4			62.3

1970 Index of Dissimilarity 18.2

1980 Index of Dissimilarity 31.1

Source: Computed by the author from data obtained from U.S. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. Census of Population: 1970 Detailed Characteristics PC (1) D24 Michigan. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office; Census of Population: 1980 General Social and Economic Characteristics PC 80-1-C24. Michigan. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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Contributing greatly to the increase was the substantial reduction (-23,7 percent) in the percent of black married-couple families and the substantial increase (60.6 percent) in the percent of black female-headed families. Such a rapid increase in the percentage of black female-headed families has important social and economic consequences. Families headed by females have a poverty rate six times that of male-headed households. Yet an increasing percentage of black youth in Michigan's central cities are living in families headed by females. If this increase continues, the socioeconomic gap between blacks and whites in Michigan may be expected to widen even more in the future.

RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Racial differences exist in the percent of blacks and whites arrested for particular crimes. Blacks in Michigan are disproportionately arrested for violent crimes. Whites, on the other hand, are disproportionately arrested for property crimes. Victims and offenders are of the same race in 3 out of 4 of the violent crimes. The typical victim of a violent crime in Michigan is a young black man from a poor family in the central city. In 1981, approximately 64 percent of the victims of confirmed murder in Michigan were black.

Blacks who are arrested for crimes often feel that the criminal justice system treats them differently from their white counterparts. The perception of unfairness held by black arrestees is generally supported by the evidence (Petersilia, 1983). Blacks convicted of a crime in Michigan (as in the rest of the United States) go to prison

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more often than whites when convicted of the following crimes: homicide, assault, robbery, rape, burglary, and larceny. However, race notwithstanding, an arrestee who has sufficient income to hire a private attorney reduces the probability of a prison term. Black arrestees are generally less likely than white arrestees to hire a private attorney. This circumstance is one of the factors accounting for a disproportionate representation of blacks in Michigan's prison population. Although the percentage of blacks in the general population in Michigan in 1980 was 12.9 percent, blacks constituted 59.5 percent of the prison population.

BLACK POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

One potential avenue for improving the socioeconomic status of blacks in Michigan is through electoral politics. The participation of blacks in electoral politics in Michigan has been weak in some parts of the state and strong in others. In the southeastern section of Michigan (in the cities of Detroit, Flint, and Pontiac), blacks hold the highest office--i.e., the mayorship. Also, there are blacks on the city councils of these cities. Blacks in this region have developed strong political organizations, and black political influence is greater than in other parts of the state.

In southwestern Michigan, on the other hand, blacks have not developed much political strength. Grand Rapids is one example. Blacks there are weak politically, with no blacks represented among the seven commissioners, even though the city is 15.5 percent black. Battle Creek, however, was one of the first Michigan cities to have a black mayor, and it presently has two blacks on the city council. Although Lansing has

a growing black middle-class and less occupational segregation by race than other Michigan cities, it has no black city council members. In general, blacks in Michigan are less active in electoral politics than their white counterparts.

RACIAL INEQUALITY AND THE MEDIA IN MICHIGAN

The media is a powerful force in shaping individual attitudes and public decisions. Yet blacks in Michigan (as in the rest of the country) remain grossly underrepresented in the media. One result has been a lack of understanding and a lack of accuracy in the reporting of many events in black neighborhoods. The message sent by the predominantly white media often accentuates the economic plight of blacks. Reports that seem to blame the victims of discrimination serve to facilitate the continued political, economic, and social exploitation of blacks.

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This report demonstrates that the socioeconomic gap between blacks and whites in Michigan remains wide. Until the difference is reduced, true black progress is not a reality. True black progress can be claimed only within a context of racial equality. For example, if the median family income of blacks in Michigan increased from $15,860 to $20,860 by 1990 and the median family income of whites in Michigan increased from $24,167 to $29,167, the result would not be true black progress. Even though the black median family income would

have increased, the white median family income would have also increased by the same amount. Thus, the racial difference gap of $8,307 would remain unchanged. Therefore, true progress for blacks in Michigan must be assessed in terms of future changes in the "socioeconomic gap" between blacks and whites. Regardless of increases in future black income, or improvements in black employment patterns, or increases in black educational attainment, if the socioeconomic gap between blacks and whites does not narrow, it is not true black progress. Furthermore, if the gap widens, it is indeed black retrogression.

Given the present conservative climate and the continued attack on equal opportunity policies and programs, it will be a long time before blacks reach parity with whites in Michigan. The challenge remains tremendous.

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